

**Ireland's Crown of Thorns  
and Roses; or, The Best of  
Her History by the Best of  
Her Writers, a Series of  
Historical Narratives That  
Read as Entertainingly as a  
Novel ..**




RYAN, FRANK J. COMP, HOLDEN, P. F., JOINT COMP









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# IRELAND'S CROWN OF THORNS AND ROSES

THE BEST OF HER HISTORY BY THE  
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A SERIES OF HISTORICAL NARRATIVES THAT READ  
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IRELAND IN PAGAN DAYS—LEARNING IN IRELAND BEFORE ST.  
PATRICK—COMING OF THE DANES, THE NORMAN AND THE  
ENGLISH—THE GLORIOUS STRUGGLE OF '98—THE GOLDEN  
ERA OF GRATTAN AND THE IRISH PARLIAMENT—  
CONSTITUTIONAL AGITATION—BIOGRAPHIES  
OF THE IRISH LEADERS—THE GAELIC  
LEAGUE RECREATING AN IRISH  
NATION—IRISH ELUQUENT  
EPIC—ETC.

AN OLD STORY  
TREATED FROM A NEW STANDPOINT

BY THE EDITOR OF THE IRELAND SERIES

EDITED BY JOHN F. KELLY, F. R. S. E., and J. F. KELLY

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GREAT SPEECHES ON GREAT OCCASIONS

STARRED—THE FIRST OF THE IRISH BISHOPS ON  
THE APOCALYPTIC PROPHECY

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— ETC — ETC —

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BY THE FOLLOWING BRILLIANT GALAXY  
OF WRITERS

MOST REV JOHN HEALY, D D Archbishop of Tuam  
A M SULLIVAN  
VERY REV SYLVESTER MALONE  
RIGHT REV PATRICK O'DONNELL, Bishop of Raphoe  
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PROF KUNO MEYER, Ph D, and others

GREAT SPEECHES ON GREAT OCCASIONS

SPARKING CEMS FROM THE JEWEL HOUSE OF  
IRELAND'S UNRIVALED ORATORY  
BY

ROBERT EMMET      A M SULLIVAN      THOMAS SEXTON, M P.  
THOMAS FRANCIS MEAGHER      CHAS STEWART PARNELL  
REV DR. CHARLES O'REILLY      W BOURKE COCKRAN  
JOHN F FINERTY

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

FRANK J RYAN and P. F HOLDEN

EMBELLISHED WITH NUMEROUS PORTRAITS OF IRELAND'S ANCIENT AND MODERN LEADERS  
PICTURES OF HISTORIC PLACES, ETC

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ELOQUENT DEFENDER OF THE DEMOCRACY OF THE UNITED STATES  
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THIS BOOK, WHICH RECORDS THE GLORIOUS  
DEEDS, THE ANCIENT GREATNESS AND

THE FUTURE POSSIBILITIES OF

THE IRISH RACE IS RE-

SPECTFULLY DEDI-

CATED

*BY THE EDITORS*

## PREFACE.

The object of the present work, "Ireland's Crown of Thorns and Roses," or studies in Irish history, is to present in simple form an outline of Ireland's joy and sorrow and to stimulate the reader to a deeper study of Irish affairs.

It has been the constant effort of the compilers not to encumber the reader with a mass of details, but to sketch events in a few words and to give in a clear and connected manner an attractive general survey.

The present work places in connected form the best thoughts of prominent Irish scholars, bearing on the great events in Ireland's career.

We may with justice repeat here the following sentences from the preface of O'Brennan's *Antiquities*

"The deeds of Greek and Latin heroes of old have their names emblazoned in the pages of story; the feuds and petty quarrels of their insignificant states are delineated as though they were great wars and immense nations; their naval armaments though not so weighty as the fishing fleet of the Galway Claddagh-men—perhaps not more numerous—are presented to the reader in such highly colored language, in such poetic ornamentation that youth is apt to compare them with the Crimean fleet or Spanish Armada.

"Their philosophers, lawgivers, are, and—no doubt—justly held up, as models of imitation. At the same time we seldom turn to Ollamh Fodhla (Ollav Fyola) who, as king, legislator and scholar, was never surpassed. As you take a walk through the delightful works on Ireland you will admire on niches on either side of you, as you move slowly on, men distinguished in every profession and pursuit, kings, princes, bards, chroniclers, generals, admirals, judges, prelates, priests, orators, senators. In fact, Irish history is a glorious hall of science, wherein are to be viewed men pre-eminent in all ages, in all times and in every art and science."

We trust that this volume may increase the interest that is now so general, in the study of Irish subjects.

+ P. J. MULDOON, D D., V. G.

*Bishop of Tamasos.*

Feb'y 25, 1904.



RIGHT REV. P. J. MULDOON, D.D., V. G.,  
Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago.





## EDITORS' NOTICE.

### WHAT THE BOOK CONTAINS —PLAN OF THE WORK.

It can be safely asserted that no such book as the present one has ever before been offered to the Irish-American reading public. It is more than a history—more, in fact, than a collection of histories. While it contains the cream of the best and most interesting Histories of Ireland that have ever been published, it is also a collection of the most erudite and absorbing articles on live Irish questions such as has never yet been put together in one volume. Not a worthless line, not an unnecessary word, not a barren idea can be found in it from cover to cover.

It has more than once been said, and by some of the best-informed in literary and historical circles, that the worst feature—and the most repellant to students—in all Irish Histories, and indeed the same applies to the histories of other nations, is the unwarrantably large space given to accounts of wars, preparations for wars, and dry enactments. In the case of Ireland, there is scarcely anything to record from a few years after the landing of Henry the Second to the days of the Volunteers, but a series of defeats—brightened once in a while by a few glorious victories, years of religious persecution, and the slow but steady encroachment of the Saxon. The Irish people have had sufficient of this kind of reading and if Irish History is not half as popular with them as it should be, it is because of this very fact. In the present volume, a clean sweep has been made of the great bulk of the dry and uninteresting matter with which our histories are filled.

The plan of the work may be briefly described as follows:

SECTION I ANCIENT IRELAND. (Covering the period from the coming of the Milesians to the overthrow of the Danes.)

MOST REV. JOHN HEALY, D. D., Archbishop of Tuam.

A. M. SULLIVAN, Author of the "Story of Ireland," "New Ireland," etc.

VERY REV. SYLVESTER MALONE, M. R. I. A.

THOMAS O'NEIL RUSSELL, Author of several Gaelic works.

## EDITORS' NOTICE

SECTION II. THE NORMAN INVASION. (Covering the period from the treachery of Dermot MacMurrough to the publication of the alleged Bull of Pope Adrian.)

MARTIN HAVERTY.

SECTION III. THE RISING OF '98. (Being a full history of the glorious struggle for liberty of the people of Wexford and surrounding counties in that memorable year.)

REV. P. F. KAVANAUGH, O. S. F.

SECTION IV. IN THE DAYS OF GRATTAN. (A complete history of the Rise and Fall of the Irish Parliament, with pen pictures of the leading men of the period, and a description of the manners and customs of the people at that time.)

SIR JONAH BARRINGTON.

SECTION V. THE MEN WHO DIED FOR IRELAND IN '48 AND '67. (A record of the heroes of the Young Ireland and Fenian Movements, with a brilliant and soul-stirring description of O'Neill Crowley's last stand for Ireland.)

M. A. MANNING. FIRST EDITOR OF "THE DUBLIN WEEKLY INDEPENDENT."

SECTION VI. IRELAND'S GREAT CONSTITUTIONAL BATTLE FOR LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENCE. (A concise but complete account of the Parnell Movement, with character sketches of its most prominent leaders—Carried down to the present time.)

T. P. O'CONNOR, M. P.

SECTION VII. THE GAELIC LEAGUE, OR THE WORK OF RE-CREATING A NATION. (Scholarly articles on the mission of the movement, and its steady progress. Brilliant papers on Irish music and Irish literature.)

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PROF. KUNO MEYER, PH. D.

THOMAS O'NEIL RUSSELL.

## EDITORS' NOTICE

SECTION VIII. GREAT SPEECHES ON GREAT OCCASIONS.  
(Sparkling gems from the jewel house of Ireland's unrivaled oratory.)

ROBERT EMMETT.  
THOMAS FRANCIS MEAGHER.  
A. M. SULLIVAN.  
CHARLES STEWART PARNELL.  
THOMAS SEXTON.  
REV. DR. CHARLES O'REILLY.  
HON. W. BOURKE COCKRAN.  
JOHN F. FINERTY.

The editors wish to state that the works of Sir Jonah Barrington and Rev. P. F. Kavanaugh are now out of print and can only be had in this volume. The notable papers by Irish ecclesiastics and others which form such an important feature of the book are sure to be received with enthusiastic approbation by all scholarly men and women. The high standard of the writers, the interesting nature of the subjects they treat of, and the manner in which they have treated them, make the book worth more than double its cost. In fact, it would be altogether impossible for the average purchaser of books to obtain the same amount of reading matter, on the same question, and of the same quality, for five times the amount.

The editors therefore anticipate for this work an unprecedented sale. It is by far the greatest book of its kind that has ever been put upon the market, an assertion which they feel justified in making, not on account of any personal part they have had in its preparation, but because of the distinguished men of Irish genius—some dead, but many, happily, still in the land of the living, whose names adorn its pages, and, further because of the intrinsic worth of the matter they contribute—a view which they feel sure will be shared in by all who even make a cursory examination of its contents.

F. J. R.—P. F. H.

November, 1903.



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## A WORD ABOUT THE COVER DESIGN

Doubtless the attention of the purchaser of this book will be at once attracted by the unique and beautiful design on the cover, and he will naturally want to know something about it

For his benefit we wish to say that the border surrounding the figure of "Irish Ireland" is copied, with some modifications, from an illuminated Irish manuscript called the "Book of MacDurnan," executed in the year 850, and still preserved with all the original colors as fresh and bright as on the day the Irish scribe traced them in the mellow shadows of the cloister. This class of work and its revival is receiving much attention in Ireland at present. On the same order of merit and beauty of design are the many reproductions of interlaced work from the "Book of Kells" and other sources, placed at the ends of chapters throughout this narrative.

Of the female figure it can be safely said that it represents the change that has taken place in Ireland in recent years by the propaganda work of the Gaelic League. Erin weeping beside her harp is no longer a true representation of Ireland. Our artist, Mr. Gus O'Shaughnessy, has caught the correct idea, and he has given us a figure of Ireland hopeful, courageous, self-reliant and conscious of her own resources, strength and dignity. One hand leans upon the harp to denote Ireland's love of music, a trait that has distinguished her for generations, while the other holds a tablet, indicative of the pre-eminence of the Irish nation as a center of learning in the past, and conveying the suggestion that, through education, may be found the remedies for the many ills from which her people suffer.

The whole design is strikingly appropriate on a book such as this, and like a flash forces the conviction on the observer that Ireland is indeed a land of Art, Literature and Music, confirmatory proof of which will be abundantly found inside its covers

EDITORS.





REV. FRANCIS L. REYNOLDS.



## INTRODUCTION.

There is no study that should so naturally interest the people of any nation as much as that of their own history. The great pulpit orator, Very Rev. Thomas N. Burke, O. P., in his lecture on "The Future of the Irish Race at Home and Abroad," has truly said "Every race, every people have their own history, have their tale to tell of joy or of sorrow, of triumph and of shame; and among the great family of nations we Celtic Irishmen have our history to look back upon, a history covering many centuries, and going back to as ancient and honorable a source as any people on the face of God's earth. And from its earliest beginnings down to the present hour, although that history is written on many pages in tears and in blood, and although it tells of centuries of unavailing struggles and defeats, and of a people ground into the very dust, it is still a history of which no Irishman need be ashamed—we should look into the past history of our race, in order that in our day we may cultivate all that made our fathers great and at the same time, taught by the light of past experience, avoid the mistakes into which they fell." As it is with religion, so is it also with patriotism. The more we study and understand our religion, the more religious we become; and the more we study and understand our history the more patriotic we become. It is for this very reason that some of the most intellectual and far-seeing men of our race have many times called attention to the lack of study of Irish history by the youth at home and abroad; knowing well that this deplorable neglect will result in the present and future generations forgetting and even repudiating their glorious ancestry. What citizen of America is not made more intensely patriotic by the study of American history, of its providential discovery by Columbus, of the development of her colonies; of the Revolutionary war; of her seven years' struggle for independence; of Lexington, Bunker Hill, Valley Forge and Yorktown; of her glorious Declaration of Independence; and of her Star Spangled Banner proudly floating on the breezes of heaven and proclaiming to the world Equality and Liberty to the oppressed of all nations?

And what Irishman, studying the pages of Irish history is

not thrilled by the antiquity and sublimity of her Civilization even many centuries before Christianity, her ancient literature, wealth, manufacture and commerce famed in all the marts and ports of Europe; her bards and learned men whose place of honor at her assemblies was assigned next to her Kings; her great military power under Niall of the Nine Hostages recognized all over Europe; her parliamentary constitutions of Tara which form the basis of parliamentary procedure even to the present day? Of Ireland the venerable Arch Ollamb writes: "O Erin, thy granaries are full, thy children are happy, thy daughters are virtuous, thy sons are brave, thy old men are wise, thy rulers are just, and thy homes are in peace." And since the dawn of Christianity in Ireland what nation presents a grander history?

Almost from the very beginning of St. Patrick's mission her Kings, her warriors, and her wise-men recognized in him a divine messenger. They listened with reverence as he told them of the one true God. How he came down from heaven and was born of an humble Virgin in Bethlehem's manger. How he lived on earth in poverty and misery; how he gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf and speech to the dumb. And oh! how they listened with breathless silence as he told them of the ingratitude of man for such benefits—of the dark sea of sorrow and anguish—of his passion and his crucifixion by those whom he had so often befriended. The recital of such wrongs was too much for their noble natures to endure. Tradition tells us how they drew their swords and with mighty indignation exclaimed: "Oh, that we were there to avenge the death of this mild and this merciful Lord." Yes, they listened and they loved. They loved a religion which corresponded to the natural inclinations and aspirations of this noble race, and they vowed that never—no never, would they abandon the religion which Patrick had brought them. And thus, from the tall and stately halls of Tara down to the poorest cottage, from the proudest chieftain down to the humblest clansman, through the length and breadth of the land, did the pure light of Christian faith shine forth with noon-day splendor. Monasteries, convents and seats of learning sprang up on all sides, and many of her Princes and high born dames and maidens, forsaking the world, sought in the cloister that happiness the world could never give.

Her fair valleys and smiling plains, her steep mountains and shady glens were adorned with religious institutions. The

clear tones of the vesper bell resounded from hill to hill. A continuous praise was sent up to the throne of the Almighty and Ireland became the "Isle of saints and scholars." The fame of her learning spread throughout the distant countries of Europe and thousands of pupils thirsting for knowledge came to drink it in at its fountain head. Monarchs and Princes invited her professors to civilize their countries, to found their universities and preside over their colleges, and Ireland became the instructress of Europe.

In Pagan times Ireland sent her soldiers all over Europe; in Christian times she sent her Missionaries. Where her warriors carried the sword her missionaries carried the cross and planted it from the rising to the setting sun.

And studying the political phase of Irish history, what student is not amazed at the almost super-human struggle for liberty which her people waged for centuries against the most ferocious tyranny and oppression? History tells us, that for more than seven hundred years the swords of Ireland's sons were never sheathed!

In that great struggle for national existence what a glorious history Ireland presents, what examples of noble bravery and self-sacrifice, what fidelity to God and Country, what loyalty to honor and manly principle, what patient resignation in hunger and privations and above all, what purity and virtue on the part of the sons and daughters of Ireland! The names of O'Neill and O'Donnell, of Sarsfield and Wolfe Tone, of Grattan and O'Connell, of Fitzgerald, Emmet, and Parnell, with a host of others who in their own sphere were equally famous, present a galaxy of warriors and statesmen unequalled, much less surpassed by any other nation. True, they have not been always successful even though many of them sacrificed their lives upon Freedom's altar and for that reason, and sometimes also because they were Irishmen, the world occasionally minimizes their praises. To use a familiar phrase—"Nothing succeeds like success." Had Washington failed in his struggle for freedom he might have been looked upon as a rash revolutionist aspiring for personal honor, but because he succeeded the world accords to him the glory he so justly deserves; and if the different revolutionary leaders in Ireland succeeded, no doubt they also would be looked upon as Washingtons, Jeffersons and Franklins. But whether they succeeded or not they will for ever live enshrined in the hearts of their countrymen, and they have given

not only to Ireland but to the whole world the most brilliant examples of matchless eloquence, indomitable bravery and uncompromising patriotism

Their memories will forever keep alive the flame of liberty in the hearts of Irishmen until England is forced to pay homage at their shrines.

What impresses the student of Irish history perhaps more than anything else, is England's policy of persistent tyranny and persecution of Ireland from the days of Henry II down to the present day. And even when England was forced to grant any concessions to Ireland she always did so in such a mean and contemptible manner as to spoil the good effects it might have produced. This evidently arises either from ignorance or misconception of Irish character, or else from a determination to keep the people of Ireland in poverty, ignorance and dis-union, in order the better and easier to keep them under her yoke. This has been the blindest policy England ever pursued. She ought to have discovered long ago that she can never rule Ireland by tyranny, and that if she had treated the people of Ireland with even partial justice they would have been not only her best friends but also her staunchest allies and defenders. Henry Grattan in his famous speech in favor of a native Parliament for Ireland in 1782 said: "Let other nations basely suppose that people were made for governments. Ireland had declared that governments were made for the people, and even crowns, those great luminaries, whose brightness they all reflect, can receive their cheering fire only from the pure flame of a free constitution. England has the plea of necessity for acknowledging the independence of America. For admitting Irish independence she has the plea of justice. America has shed much English blood and America is to be set free. Ireland sheds her own blood for England and is Ireland to remain in fetters? Is Ireland to be the only nation whose liberty England will not acknowledge and whose affections she cannot subdue? We have received the Civic crown from our people, and shall we, like slaves, lay it down at the feet of British supremacy?"

The present volume, entitled "Ireland's Crown of Thorns and Roses," supplies a long-felt want in the study of Irish literature. In many works on the same subject, the reader is liable to get lost in the maze of a remote antiquity, and in a vast confusion of names and dates, but all these disagreeable features have been almost entirely eliminated from the pres-



ent work. It does not become tiresome or monotonous, and the reader does not feel like putting it aside, for it sustains an intense interest from beginning to end. It is as the author has well said in his title-page, "The Best of Irish History by the best of Ireland's writers, and reads as entertainingly as a novel."

The brilliant array of writers and orators in connection with the present work ought to be its highest recommendation, for they are men of profound learning, and international fame. Their very names are enough to adorn the pages of any book, and there is no Irish or Irish-American family which should not possess, and above all, *study* a work of this kind.

FRANCIS L. REYNOLDS, P. P.,  
*Holy Angel's Church.*

Aurora, Ill., May 15, 1904.



Composed from the Book of Kells.





SECTION I.

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ANCIENT IRELAND

BY

MOST REV. JOHN HEALY, D. D., Archbishop of Tuam

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CONTAINING

FULL ACCOUNT OF OUR MILESIAK ANCESTORS—LEARNING  
IN IRELAND BEFORE ST. PATRICK—COMING OF  
ST. PATRICK—THE LEINSTER TRIBUTE—  
DEFEAT OF THE DANES—ST.  
PATRICK'S BURIAL PLACE



## INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

### LEARNING IN IRELAND BEFORE ST. PATRICK.

BY MOST REV. JOHN HEALY, D. D., ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

Many writers have asserted that there was not only no literary culture of any kind in Ireland before the time of St. Patrick, but that even the use of written characters was quite unknown in pre-Christian Ireland. We have no intention of discussing this wide question in all its various aspects. We think, however, without becoming too learned, it can be clearly shown, by examining the history of even one single monarch, that considerable progress had been made in pagan Ireland both in the arts of war and peace at least two centuries before the advent of St. Patrick to our shores.

The reign of Cormac Mac Art furnishes, perhaps, the most interesting chapter in the history of pre-Christian Ireland. He was, we think, the greatest king that ever reigned in ancient Erin. He was, as our poets tell us, a sage, a judge, and a scholar, as well as a great king and a skilful warrior. His reign furnished, indeed, many rich themes for the romantic poets and story-tellers of subsequent ages, in which they greatly indulged their perfervid Celtic indignation. But the leading facts of his reign are all within the limits of authentic history, and are provable by most satisfactory evidence.

Cormac was the son of Art, the Solitary, or the Melancholy, as he is sometimes called, and was grandson of the celebrated Conn the Hundred-Fighter. Hence he is sometimes called Cormac O'Cuinn, as well as Cormac Mac Art. His father was slain about the year A. D. 195, in the great battle of Magh Mucruimbe where, as at the battle of Aughrim in the same county, a kingdom was lost and won. Magh Mucruimbe was the ancient name of the great limestone plain extending from Athenry towards Oranmore; and the spot where King Art was killed has been called Tulach Art even down to our own times. It was between Oranmore and Kilcornan, and close to the townland of Moyvacla. The victor in this great battle was Lughaidh, surnamed Mac Con, who had been for many years a refugee in Britain, and now returned with a king of that country and a host of foreigners to wrest the kingdom from Art, who was his maternal uncle. The flower

of the chivalry of Munster perished also on that fatal field; for the seven sons of Oiholl Olum who had come to assist King Art, their mother's brother, were slain to a man on the field or in the rout that followed

Fortunately for young Cormac, the king's son, he was at that time at fosterage in Connaught, probably with Nia Mor, who was his cousin, and one of the sub-kings of the province at that time. So Mac Con, the usurper, found no obstacle to prevent him assuming the sovereignty of Tara; and we are told that he reigned some thirty years, from A. D. 196 to A. D. 226.

Meantime young Cormac was carefully trained in all martial exercises, as well as in all the learning befitting a king, until he came to man's estate. Then he came to Tara in disguise, and according to one account, was employed in herding the sheep of a poor widow, who lived close to Tara, when some of the sheep were seized for trespassing on the queen's private green or lawn. When this case of trespass was brought before the king in his court on the western slope of the Hill of Tara, he adjudged that the sheep should be forfeited for the trespass. "No," said Cormac, who was present, "the sheep have only eaten of the fleece of the land, and in justice their own fleece only should be forfeited for that trespass." The bystanders murmured their approval, and even Mac Con himself cried out. "It is the judgment of a king," for kings were supposed to possess a kind of inspiration in giving their decisions. But immediately recognizing Cormac, whom he knew to be in the country, he tried to seize him on the spot. But Cormac leaped the mound of the Claenfert, and not only succeeded in effecting his escape, but also in raising such a body of his and his father's friends, that he was able to drive the usurper from Tara. Mac Con fled to his own relatives in the South of Ireland, where he was shortly afterward killed, at a place called Gort-an-Oir, near Cahir, in the County Tipperary.

So Cormac, disciplined in adversity, came to the throne in the year 227 A. D., according to the Four Masters. During the earlier years of his reign he was engaged in continual wars with the provincial kings, who had yet to learn that Cormac was their master in fact as well as in right. We are told that he fought no less than fifty battles against the provincial kings to vindicate his own position as High King of Erin. The accurate Tighernach furnishes us with brief no-



tices of these various battles against these refractory sub-kings. In one year he fought three battles against the Ultonians. In another he fought four times against the Momonians. The Leinster King Dunlaing, taking advantage of Cormac's absence from Tara, attacked the royal rath itself, and wantonly slaughtered thirty noble maidens with their attendants—thirty for each—who lived in a separate building on the north-western slope of Tara. Cormac promptly avenged this awful massacre by invading Leinster, and putting to death twelve sub-kings of that province, and besides he increased and enforced the payment of the ancient Borruméan or cow-tribute imposed by his predecessors on that province. The Ultonians, however, were his most inveterate foes; and twice, it seems, they succeeded in deposing him, that is, in driving him for some months from Tara. At length, however, the king gained a complete victory over his northern rivals, with the aid of Tadhg, a grandson of Oilioll Olum, and his Munster auxiliaries. Cormac rewarded the Munster hero by giving him, as he had promised, as much of the territory of Meath as Tadhg could drive round in his chariot from the close of the battle till sunset. The veteran hero, spent with loss of blood and battle toil, still contrived to drive his chariot round a district extending from Duleek to the Liffey, which was afterwards called *Ciarnachta*—the land of Cian's descendants. Tadhg's father was a Cian, son of Oiholl Olum, hence the name.

Cormac, now undisputed master of his kingdom, took measures to preserve the public peace and secure the prosperity of his dominions. He was the first, and we may also say, the last king of Erin, who maintained a standing army to check the arrogance of his turbulent sub-kings. This Fenian militia was, it is said, modeled after the Roman legions which Cormac might have seen or heard of at the time in Britain. They were quartered on the people in winter; but in summer they lived on the produce of the chase, and gave all their leisure to martial exercises. By this means they became most accomplished in all feats of arms, and the fame of these Fenian heroes has come down to our own time in the living traditions of the people. The celebrated Finn Mac Cumhail was their general—a poet, too, it was said, he was, and a scholar, as well as a renowned warrior. Ossian, the hero-poet, was his son, and the brave, gentle Oscar, who fell in the fatal field of Gavra, was his grandson. We are told, too, that Cormac kept

a fleet on the sea for three years, and doubtless swept away the pirate ships of Britain and the islands that used to make descents from time to time on the eastern coast of Ireland.

But it is with the literary history of King Cormac's reign we are most concerned, and to this we invite the special attention of the reader. His first work was to re-establish the ancient Feis of Tara.

Tara even then had been the residence of the High Kings of Erin from immemorial ages. Slainge, the first king of the Firbolgs, was its reputed founder, and all the kings of that colony, as well as of the Tuatha de Danaan and the Milesian race, had generally dwelt on the same royal hill. Ollamh Fodhla, one of the most renowned kings in the bardic history, "reigned forty years and died in his own house at Tara." It is said that this king was the first who convened the great Feis of Tara to legislate in solemn assembly for all the tribes of Erin. O'Flaherty adds that the same ancient monarch founded a "Mur Ollamhan" or college of learned doctors at Tara; but Petrie could find no authority for this statement except the term "Mur Ollamhan," which might, however, simply mean the mur, or fortified house of Ollamh Fodhla himself.

During the shadowy period that follows down to the Christian era, we hear little of Tara, even in the bardic history. An undoubtedly historical king, Tuathal Teachtmair, about the year 85 of the Christian era, took a portion of each of the four provinces to make a mensal demesne for the High King of Tara. He convened the states of the kingdom, too, on the royal hill in solemn assembly, and induced the assembled kings and chiefs to swear on all the elements that they would always yield obedience to the princes of his race.

The Feis of Tara, then, was in existence before the time of Cormac, but it was seldom convened and had almost fallen into disuse. Cormac it was who made arrangements for the regular meetings of this great parliament of the nation, and provided adequate accommodation for the assembled notables. Here we are on firm historic ground, and can enter into more minute details with security.

The object of this Feis of Tara was mainly three-fold. First, to enact and promulgate what was afterwards called the cain-law, which was obligatory in all the territories and tribes of the kingdom, as distinguished from the urradhas, or local law. Secondly, to test and sanction the Annals of Erin. For

this purpose the local Seanachies or historians brought in a record of the notable events that took place in their own territories. These were publicly read for the assembly, and when duly authenticated were entered on the great record of the King of Tara, called afterwards the "Saltair of Tara." Thirdly, to record in the same great national record the genealogies of the ruling families, to assess the taxes, and settle all cases of disputed succession among the tribes of the kingdom. Too often was this done by the strong hand; but it was Cormac's idea to fix the succession, as far as possible, according to definite principles amongst the ruling families. The neglect of a strong central government to enforce this most wise provision was one main cause of the subsequent distracted state of the kingdom.

This great national assembly, convened for these purposes, met once every three years. The session continued for a week, beginning the third day before, and ending the third day after November Day. When so many turbulent chieftains, oftentimes at feud amongst themselves, met together, it was necessary to keep the peace of Tara by very stringent regulations, enforced under the most rigorous penalties. It is to Cormac's prudent forethought we owe these regulations, which were afterwards inviolably observed as the law of Tara. Every provincial king and every sub-king had his own fixed place allotted to him near the High King by the Marshals of Tara; and every chief was bound to take his seat under the place where his shield was hung upon the wall. Brawling was strictly forbidden, and to wound another was a capital crime.

In order to provide suitable accommodation for this great assembly, Cormac erected the Teach Míodhchuarta, which was capable of accommodating 1,000 persons, and was at once a parliament house, banquet hall and hotel. We have two accounts of this great building, as well as of the monuments at Tara, written about nine hundred years ago—one in poetry, the other in prose. The statements made by these ancient writers have been verified in every essential point by the measurements of the officers of the Ordnance Survey, who were enabled from these documents to fix the position and identity of all these ancient monuments at Tara.

"The Teach Míodhchuarta," says the old prose writer in the *Dimseanchus*, "is to the north-west of the eastern mound. The ruins of this house—it was then in ruins—are situate

thus: the lower part to the north and the higher part to the south; and walls are raised about it to the east and to the west. The northern side of it is enclosed and small, the lie of it is north and south. It is in the form of a long house, with twelve doors upon it, or fourteen, seven to the west and seven to the east. This was the great house of a thousand soldiers." We ourselves have lunched on the grass-green floor of this once famous hall, and we can of our own knowledge testify to the accuracy of this ancient writer. The openings for the doors can still be traced in the enclosing mound, and, curiously enough, one is so nearly obliterated that it is difficult still to say whether there were six or seven openings on each side. The building was seven hundred and sixty feet long, and originally nearly ninety feet wide, according to Petrie's measurements. There was a double row of benches on each side, running the entire length of the hall. In the centre there was a number of fires in a line between the benches, and over the fires there was a row of spits depending from the roof, at which a large number of joints might be roasted. There is in the Book of Leinster a ground-plan of the building, and the rude figure of a cook in the centre turning the spit with his mouth open, and a ladle in his hand to baste the joint.

The king of Erin took his place at the head of the hall to the south, surrounded by the provincial kings. The nobles and officers were arranged on either side according to their dignity, down to the lowest, or northern end of the hall, which was crowded with butlers, scullions and retainers. They slept at night under the couches or sometimes upon them.

The appearance of Cormac at the head of this great hall is thus described in an extract copied into the Book of Ballymote from the older and now lost Book of Navan:

"Beautiful was the appearance of Cormac in that assembly. Flowing and slightly curling was his golden hair. A red buckler with stars and animals of gold, and fastenings of silver upon him. A crimson cloak in wide descending folds around him, fastened at his neck with precious stones. A neck torque of gold around his neck. A white shirt with a full collar, and intertwined with red gold thread, upon him. A girdle of gold inlaid with precious stones was around him. Two wonderful shoes of gold, with golden loops, upon his feet. Two spears with golden sockets in his hands, with many rivets of



red bronze. And he was himself besides symmetrical and beautiful of form, without blemish or reproach."

This might be deemed a purely imaginary description if the collection of antiquities in the Royal Irish Academy did not prove beyond doubt that similar golden ornaments to those referred to in this passage were of frequent use in Ireland. In the year 1810 two neck torques of purest gold similar to those described above were found on the Hill of Tara itself, and are now to be seen in the Academy's collection.

"Alas," says an old writer, "Tara to-day is desolate, it is a green, grassy land, but it was once a noble hill to view, the mansion of warlike heroes, in the days of Cormac O'Cuinn—when Cormac was in his glory "

Everything at Tara, even its present desolation, is full of interest, and reminds us of the days "when Cormac was in his glory." His house is there within the circle of the great *Rath na Riogh*. The mound where he kept his hostages may still be seen beside his Rath. The stream issuing from the well *Neamhnach*, on which he built the first mill in Ireland for his handmaiden, Ciarnaid, to spare her the labor of grinding with the quern, still flows down the eastern slope of Tara Hill, and still, says Petrie, turns a mill. Even the well on the western slope beside which Cormac's *cuchtair*, or kitchen, was built, has been discovered. The north-western *clanfert*, or *decliv*-ity, where he corrected the false judgment of King Mac Con about the trespass of the widow's sheep, may still be traced. The Rath of his Mother, Maeve, may be seen not far from Tara, and to the west of the Teach Miodhchuarta may be noticed Rath Graine, the sunny palace of his daughter, the faithless spouse of Finn Mac Cumhail.

O'Flaherty tells us on the authority of an old poem found in the Book of Shane Mor O'Dugan, who flourished about 1390, that Cormac founded three schools at Tara—one for teaching the art of war, the second for the study of history, and the third was a school of jurisprudence. This is extremely probable, especially as Cormac himself was an accomplished scholar in all these sciences. This brings us to the literary works attributed to Cormac Mac Art by all our ancient Irish scholars.

The first of these is a treatise still extant in manuscript entitled *Teagusc na Riogh* or *Institutio Principum*. It is ascribed to King Cormac in the Book of Leinster written before the Anglo-Norman Invasion of Ireland. It is in the

form of a dialogue between Cormac and his son and successor Cairbre Lifeachair; "and," says the quaint old MacGeoghegan, "this book contains as goodly precepts and moral documents as Cato or Aristotle did ever write." The language is of the most archaic type, but extracts have been translated and published in the Dublin Penny Journal.

A still more celebrated work, now unfortunately lost, the *Saltair of Tara*, has been universally attributed to Cormac by Irish scholars. Perhaps we should rather say it was compiled under his direction. "It contained," says an ancient writer in the *Book of Ballymote*, "the synchronisms and genealogies, as well as the succession of the Irish kings and monarchs, their battles, their contests, and their antiquities from the world's beginning down to the time it was written. And this is the *Saltair of Tara*, which is the origin and fountain of the histories of Erin from that period down to the present time." "This," adds the writer in the *Book of Ballymote*, "is taken from the *Book of Machongbhail*"—that is, the *Book of Navan*, a still more ancient but now lost work. Not only does the writer in the ancient *Book of Navan*, and the copyist in the *Book of Ballymote*, expressly attribute this work to Cormac, but a still more ancient authority, the poet Cuan O'Lochain, who died in 1024, has this stanza in his poem on Tara:

"He (Cormac) compiled the *Saltair of Tara*,  
In that *Saltair* is contained  
The best summary of history,  
It is the *Saltair* which assigns  
Seven chief kings to Erin of harbours, &c., &c."

And it is, indeed, self-evident to the careful student of our annals that there must have been some one ancient "origin and fountain" from which the subsequent historians of Erin have derived their information, and existing monuments prove it to be quite accurate—concerning the reign of Cormac and his more immediate predecessors in Ireland. The man who restored the Feis of Tara, and who, as we shall presently see, was also a celebrated judge and lawyer, was exactly such a person of forethought and culture as would gather together the poets and historians of his kingdom to execute under his own immediate direction this great work for the benefit of posterity. Keating tells us that it was called the *Saltair of Tara* because the chief Ollave of Tara had it in his official



custody; and as Cormac Mac Cullinan's Chronicle was called the *Saltair of Cashel*, and the *Festilogium of Aengus the Culdee* was called the *Saltair na Rann*, so this great compilation was named the *Saltair of Tara*. Thus, as O'Curry remarks, disposes of Petrie's objection that its name would rather indicate the Christian origin of the book. The answer is simple—Cormac never called the book by this name, any more than the compilers of the great works like the *Book of Ballymore* or the *Book of Leinster* ever called those great compilations by their present names.

Cormac was also a distinguished jurist—of that we have conclusive evidence in the *Book of Aicill*, which has been published in the third volume of the *Brehon Law* publications. The book itself is most explicit as to its authorship, and everything in the text goes to confirm the statements in the introduction, part of which is worth reproducing here.

"The place of this book is Aicill, close to Temhair (Tara), and its time is the time of Coirpri Lifechair, son of Cormac, and its author is Cormac, and the cause of its having been composed was the blinding of the eye of Cormac by Ængus Gabhnaideh, after the abduction of the daughter of Sorar, son of Art Corb, by Cellach, son of Cormac."

The author then tells us how the spear of Ængus grazed the eye of Cormac and blinded him.

"Then Cormac was sent out to be cured by Aicill (the Hill of Skreen) . . . and the sovereignty of Erin was given to Coirpri Lifechair, son of Cormac, for it was prohibited that anyone with a blemish should be king at Tara, and in every difficult case of judgment that came to him he (Coirpri) used to go to ask his father about it, and his father used to say to him, 'My son, that thou mayest know' (the law), and 'the exemptions'; and these words are at the beginning of all his explanations. And it was there, at Aicill, that this book was thus composed, and wherever the words 'exemptions,' and 'my son that thou mayest know', occur was Cormac's part of the book, and Cennfaeladh's part the rest."

This proves beyond doubt that the greatest portion of this *Book of Aicill* was written by Cormac at Skreen, near Tara, when disqualified for holding the sovereignty on account of his wound. It was a treatise written for the benefit of his son unexpectedly called to fill the monarch's place at Tara. The text, too, bears out this account. Cormac apparently furnished the groundwork of the present volume by writing for

his son's use a series of maxims or principles on the criminal law of Erin, which were afterwards developed by Cormac himself and by subsequent commentators. That the archaic legal maxims so enunciated in the Book of Aicill were once written by Cormac himself there can be no reasonable doubt; although it is now quite impossible to ascertain how far the development of the text was the work of Cormac or of subsequent legal authorities, who doubtless added to and modified the commentary whilst they left Cormac's text itself unchanged.

This Book of Aicill, the authenticity of which cannot, we think, be reasonably questioned, proves beyond all doubt that in the third century of the Christian era there was a considerable amount of literary culture in Celtic Ireland. These works are still extant in the most archaic form of the Irish language; they have been universally attributed to Cormac Mac Art for the last ten centuries by all our Irish scholars; the intrinsic evidence of their authorship and antiquity is equally striking—why then should we reject this mass of evidence, and accept the crude theories of certain modern pretenders in the antiquities of Ireland, who without even knowing the language, undertake to tell us that there was no knowledge of the use of writing in Ireland before St. Patrick?

And is not such an assertion *a priori* highly improbable? The Romans had conquered Britain in the time of Agricola—the first century of the Christian era. The Britons themselves had very generally become Christians during the second and third centuries, and had to some extent at least been imbued with Roman civilization. Frequent intercourse, sometimes friendly and sometimes hostile, existed between the Irish and Welsh tribes especially. A British king was killed at the battle of Magh Mucruimhe in Galway where Cormac's own father was slain. The allies of Mac Con on that occasion were British. He himself had spent the years of his exile in Wales. Captives from Ireland were carried to Britain, and captives from Britain were carried to Ireland. Is it likely, then, that when the use of letters was quite common in Britain for three centuries no knowledge of their use would have come to Ireland until the advent of St. Patrick in the fifth century of the Christian era?

There is an ancient and well-founded tradition that Cormac Mac Art died a Christian, or as the Four Masters say, “turned from the religion of the Druids to the worship of

the true God." It is in itself highly probable. Some knowledge of Christianity must have penetrated into Ireland even so early as the reign of Cormac Mac Art. It is quite a popular error to suppose that there were no Christians in Ireland before the time of St. Patrick. Palladius had been sent from Rome before him "to the Scots," that is the Irish, "who believed in Christ." Besides that intimate connection between Ireland and Britain, of which we have spoken, must have carried some knowledge of Christianity, as well as the letters, from one country to the other. King Lucius, the first Christian King of the British, flourished quite half of a century before the time of Cormac. Tertullian speaks of the isles of the Britains as subject to Christ about the time that Cormac's father, Art, was slain at Magh Mucruinhe. There was a regularly organized hierarchy in England during the third century, and three of their bishops were present at the Council of Arles in 314.

Nothing is more likely than that the message of the Gospels was brought from England to the ears of King Cormac, and that a prince, so learned and so wise, gave up the old religion of the Druids, and embraced the new religion of peace and love.

But it was a dangerous thing to do even for a king. The Druids were very popular and very influential, and moreover possessed, it was said, dreadful magic powers. They showed it afterwards in the time of St. Patrick, and now they show it when they heard Cormac had given up the old religion of Erin, and become a convert to the new worship from the East. The king's death was caused by the bone of a salmon sticking in his throat, and it was universally believed that this painful death was brought about by the magical power of Maelgenn, the chief of the Druids

"They loosed their curse against the king,  
They cursed him in his flesh and bones;  
'And daily in their mystic ring  
They turned the maledictive stones.

"Till where at meat the monarch sate,  
'Amid the revel and the wine,  
He choked upon the food he ate  
'At Cletty, southward of the Boyne."

So perished, A. D. 267, the wisest and best of the ancient kings of Erin. Cormac, when dying, told his people not to bury him in the pagan cemetery of Brugh on the Boyne, but at Rossnaree, where he first believed, and with his face to the rising sun. But when the king was dead, his captains declared they would bury their king with his royal sires in Brugh:

“Dead Cormac on his bier they laid;  
He reigned a king for forty years,  
And shame it were, his captains said,  
He lay not with his royal peers.

“What though a dying man should rave  
Of changes o’er the eastern sea;  
In Brugh of Boyne shall be his grave  
And not in noteless Rossnaree.”

So they prepared to cross the fords of Boyne, and bury the king at Brugh. But royal Boyne was loyal to its dead king; “the deep full-hearted river rose” to bar the way; and when the bearers attempted to cross the ford, the swelling flood swept them from their feet, and caught up the bier, and “proudly bore away the king” on its own heaving bosom. Next morning the corpse was found on the bank of the river at Rossnaree, and was duly interred within the hearing of its murmuring waters. There great Cormac was left to his rest with his face to the rising sun, awaiting the dawning of that glory which was soon to lighten over the hills and valleys of his native land.

JOHN HEALY, D. D.,  
*Archbishop of Tuam.*





# FROM MILESIAN TO DANE.

BY A. M. SULLIVAN.

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## CHAPTER I.

OUR MILESIAN FOREFATHERS—THE THREE QUEENS FROM WHOM  
IRELAND DERIVED HER POETICAL NAMES.

The earliest settlement or colonization of Ireland of which there is tolerably precise and satisfactory information, was that by the sons of Miledh or Milesius, from which the Irish are occasionally styled Milesians. There are abundant evidences that at least two or three "waves" of colonization had long previously reached the island; but it is not very clear whence they came. Those first settlers are severally known in history as the Partholanians, the Nemedians, the Firbolgs, and the Tuatha de Danaans. These latter, who immediately preceded the Milesians, possessed a civilization and a knowledge of "arts and sciences," which, limited as we may be sure it was, greatly amazed the earlier settlers by the results it produced. To the Firbolgs (the more early settlers) the wonderful things done by the conquering new-comers, and the wonderful knowledge they displayed, could only be the results of supernatural power. Accordingly they set down the Tuatha de Danaans as "magicians," an idea which the Milesians, as we shall presently see, also adopted.

The Firbolgs seem to have been a pastoral race; the Tuatha de Danaans were more of a manufacturing and commercial people. The soldier Milesian came, and he ruled over all.

The Milesian colony reached Ireland from Spain, but they were not Spaniards. They were an eastern people who had tarried in that country on their way westward, seeking, they said, an island promised to the posterity of their ancestor, Gadelius. Moved by this mysterious purpose to fulfill their destiny, they had passed from land to land, from the shores of Asia across the wide expanse of southern Europe, bearing aloft through all their wanderings the Sacred Banner, which symbolized to them at once their origin and their mission, the

blessing and the promise given to their race. This celebrated standard, the "Sacred Banner of the Milesians," was a flag on which was represented a dead serpent and the rod of Moses; a device to commemorate forever amongst the posterity of Gadelius, the miracle by which his life had been saved. The story of this event, treasured with singular pertinacity by the Milesians, is told as follows in their traditions, which so far I have been following:

While Gadelius, being yet a child, was sleeping one day, he was bitten by a poisonous serpent. His father—Niul, a younger son of the king of Scythia—carried the child to the camp of the Israelites, then close by, where the distracted parent with tears and prayers implored the aid of Moses. The inspired leader was profoundly touched by the anguish of Niul. He laid the child down, and prayed over him; then he touched with his rod the wound, and the boy arose healed. Then, say the Milesians, the man of God promised or prophesied for the posterity of the young prince, that they should inhabit a country in which no venomous reptile could live, an island which they should seek and find in the track of the setting sun.

It was not, however, until the third generation subsequently that the descendants and people of Gadelius are found setting forth on their prophesied wanderings; and of this migration itself—of the adventures and fortunes of the Gadelian colony in its journeyings—the history would make a volume. At length we find them tarrying in Spain, where they built a city, Brigantia, and occupied and ruled a certain extent of territory. It is said that Ith (pronounced "Eeh") uncle of Milesius, an adventurous explorer, had in his cruising northward of the Brigantian coast, sighted the Promised Isle, and, landing to explore it, was attacked by the inhabitants (Tuatha de Danaans) and mortally wounded ere he could regain his ship. He died at sea on the way homeward. His body was reverentially preserved and brought back to Spain by his son, Lui (spelled Lugaid), who had accompanied him and who now summoned the entire Milesian host to the last stage of their destined wanderings—to avenge the death of Ith, and occupy the promised isle. The old patriarch himself, Miledh, had died before Lui arrived; but his sons all responded quickly to the summons; and the widowed queen, their mother, Scota, placed herself at the head of the expedition, which soon sailed in thirty galleys for "the isle they had



seen in dreams." The names of the sons of Milesius, who thus sailed for Ireland, were, Heber the Fair, Amergin, Heber the Brown, Colpa, Ir, and Heremon, and the date of this event is generally supposed to have been about fourteen hundred years before the birth of our Lord

At the time Ireland, known as Innis Ealga (the Noble Isle), was ruled over by three brothers, Tuatha de Danaan princes, after whose wives (who were three sisters) the island was alternately called Eire, Banba (or Banva) and Fiola (spelled Fodhla), by which names Ireland is still frequently styled in national poems. Whatever difficulties or obstacles beset the Milesians in landing they at once attributed to the "necromancy" of the Tuatha de Danaans, and the old traditions narrate amusing stories of the contest between the resources of magic and the power of Valour. When the Milesians could not discover land where they thought to sight it, they simply agreed that the Tuatha de Danaans had by their black arts rendered it invisible. At length they descried the island, its tall blue hills touched by the last beams of the setting sun, and from the galleys there arose a shout of joy; Innisfail, the Isle of Destiny, was found. But lo, next morning the land was submerged, until only a low ridge appeared above the ocean. A device of the magicians, say the Milesians. Nevertheless, they reached the shore and made good their landing. The "magician" inhabitants, however, stated that this was not conquest by the rules of war; that they had no standing army to oppose the Milesians; but if the new-comers would again take to their galleys they should, if able once more to effect a landing, be recognized as masters of the isle by the laws of war.

The Milesians did not much like the proposition. They feared much the "necromancy" of the Tuatha de Danaans. It had cost them trouble enough already to get their feet upon the soil, and they did not greatly relish the idea of having to begin it all over again. They debated the point, and it was resolved to submit the case to the decision of Amergin, who was the Ollave (the Learned Man, Lawgiver, or Seer) of the expedition. Amergin, strange to say, decided on the merits against his own brothers and kinsmen, and in favor of the Tuatha de Danaans. Accordingly, with scrupulous obedience of his decision, the Milesians relinquished all they had so far won. They re-embarked in their galleys, and as demanded, withdrew "nine waves off from the shore." Immediately a

hurricane, raised, say their versions, by the spells of the magicians on shore, burst over the fleet, dispersing it in all directions. Several of the princes and chiefs and their wives and retainers were drowned. The Milesians paid dearly for their chivalrous acquiescence in the rather singular proposition of the inhabitants endorsed by the decision of Amergin. When they did land next time, it was not in one combined force, but in detachments widely separated; some at the mouth of the Boyne; others on the Kerry coast. A short but fiercely contested campaign decided the fate of the kingdom. In the first great pitched battle, which was fought in a glen a few miles south of Tralee, the Milesians were victorious. But they lost the aged Queen-Mother, *Scota*, who fell amidst the slain, and was buried beneath a royal cairn in Glen Scohene, close by. Indeed the Queens of ancient Ireland figure very prominently in our history, as we shall learn as we proceed. In the final engagement, which was fought at Taitan in Meath, between the sons of Milesius and the three Tuatha de Danaan kings, the latter were utterly and finally defeated, and were themselves slain. And with their husbands, the three brothers, there fell upon that dreadful day, when crown and country, home and husband, all were lost to them, the three sisters, Queens Eire, Banva and Fiola!



Composed from Book of Kells.

## CHAPTER II.

### PROOFS OF IRELAND'S EARLY CIVILIZATION—THE TRIENNEAL PARLIAMENT OF TARA.

It is unnecessary to follow through their details the proceedings of the Milesian princes in the period immediately subsequent to the landing. It will suffice to state that in a comparatively brief time they subdued the country, entering, however, into regular pacts, treaties, or alliances, with the conquered but not powerless Firbolgs and Tuatha de Danaans. According to the constitution under which Ireland was governed for more than a thousand years, the population of the island were distinguished in two classes—the Free Clans, and the Unfree Clans; the former being the descendants of the Milesian legions, the latter the descendants of the subjected Tuatha de Danaans and Firbolgs. The latter were allowed certain rights and privileges, and to a great extent regulated their own internal affairs; but they could not vote in the selection of a sovereign, nor exercise any other of the attributes of full citizenship without special leave. Indeed, those subject populations occasioned the conquerors serious trouble by their hostility from time to time for centuries afterwards. The sovereignty of the island was jointly vested in, or assumed by, Heremon and Heber—the Romulus and Remus of ancient Ireland. Like these twin brothers, who, seven hundred years later on, founded Rome, Heber and Heremon quarrelled in the sovereignty. In a pitched battle fought between them, Heber was slain, and Heremon remained sole ruler of the Island. For more than a thousand years the dynasty thus established reigned in Ireland, the sceptre never passing out of the family of Milesius in the direct line of descent, unless upon one occasion (to which we shall more fully advert at the proper time) for the brief period of less than twenty years. The Milesian appears to have exhibited considerable energy in organizing the country and establishing what we call “institutions,” some of which have been adopted or copied, with improvements and adaptations, by the most civilized governments of the present day; and the island advanced in renown for valor, for wealth, for manufactures, and for commerce. By this, however, our readers are not to suppose that

anything like the civilization of our times, or even faintly approaching that to which Greece and Rome afterwards attained, prevailed at this period in Ireland. Not so. But, compared with the civilization of its own period in Northern and Western Europe, and recollecting how isolated and how far removed Ireland was from the great center and source of colonization and civilization in the East, the civilization of pagan Ireland must be admitted to have been proudly eminent. In the works remaining to us of the earliest writers of ancient Rome, we find references to Ireland that test the high position it then held in the estimation of the most civilized and learned nations of antiquity. From our own historians we know that more than fifteen hundred years before the birth of our Lord, gold mining and smelting, and artistic workings in the precious metals, were carried on to a great extent in Ireland. Numerous facts might be adduced to prove that a high order of political, social, industrial and intellectual intelligence prevailed in the country. Even in an age which was rudely barbaric elsewhere a'll over the world, the superiority of intellect or force of the scholar over the soldier, was not only recognized, but decreed by legislation in Ireland<sup>1</sup>. We find in the Irish chronicles that in the reign of Eochy the First (more than a thousand years before Christ) society was classified into seven grades, each marked by the number of colors in its dress, and that in this classification men of learning, i. e., eminent scholars, or savants as they would now be called, were by law ranked next to royalty. But the most signal proof of all, attesting the existence in Ireland at that period of a civilization marvellous for its time, was the celebrated institution of the Feis Tara, or triennial parliament of Tara, one of the first formal parliaments or legislative assemblies of which we have record. This great national legislative assembly was instituted by an Irish monarch, whose name survives as a synonym of wisdom and justice, Ollav Fiola, who reigned as Ard Ri of Erin about one thousand years before the birth of Christ. To this assembly were regularly summoned:

Firstly—All the subordinate royal princes or chieftains;

Secondly—Ollaves and bards, judges, scholars and historians; and,

Thirdly—Military commanders.

We have in the old records the most precise accounts of the formalities observed at the opening and during the sitting



of the assembly, from which we learn that its proceedings were regulated with admirable order and conducted with the greatest solemnity. Nor was the institution of "Triennial parliaments" the only instance in which this illustrious Irish monarch over two thousand eight hundred years ago, anticipated to a certain extent the forms of constitutional government of which the nineteenth century is so proud. In the civil administration of the kingdom the same enlightened wisdom was displayed. He organized the country into regular prefectures. "Over every cantred," says the historian, "he appointed a chieftain, and over every town land a kind of a prefect or secondary chief, all being the officials of the king of Ireland." After a reign of more than forty years, this "true Irish King" died at an advanced age, having lived to witness long the prosperity, happiness and peace which his noble efforts had diffused all over the realm. His real name was Eochy the Fourth, but he is more familiarly known in history by the title of "Ollav Fiola," that is, the "Ollav," or law-giver, pre-eminently of Ireland.

Though the comparative civilization of Ireland at this remote time was so high, the annals of the period disclosed the usual recurrence of wars for the throne between rival members of the same dynasty, which early and mediæval history in general exhibits. Reading over the history of ancient Ireland, as of ancient Greece, Rome, Assyria, Gaul, Britain or Spain, one is struck by the number of sovereigns who fell by violent deaths, and the fewness of those who ended their reigns otherwise. But those were the days when between Kings and princes, chiefs and warriors, the sword was the ready arbiter that decided all causes, executed all judgments, avenged all wrongs, and accomplished all ambitions. Moreover, it is essential to bear in mind that the kings of those times commanded and led their own armies not in theory but in reality and fact, and that personal participation in the battle and prowess in the field was expected and necessary on the part of the royal commander. Under such circumstances, one can easily perceive how it came to pass, naturally and inevitably, that the battle-field became ordinarily the death bed of the king. In those early times the kings who did not fall by the sword, in fair battle or unfair assault, were the exceptions everywhere. Yet it is a remarkable fact that we find the average duration of the reigns of Irish monarchs, for fifteen hundred or two thousand years after the Milesian

dynasty ascended the throne, was as long as that of most European reigns in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Several of the Milesian sovereigns enjoyed reigns extending to over thirty years; some to fifty years. Many of them were highly accomplished and learned men, liberal patrons of arts, science and commerce; and as one of them, fourteen hundred years before the Christian era, instituted regularly convened parliaments, so we find others of them instituting orders of knighthood and Companionships of Chivalry long before we hear of their establishment elsewhere.

The Irish kings of this period, as well as during the first ten centuries of the Christian era, in frequent instances intermarried with the royal families of other countries—Spain, Gaul, Britain and Alba; and the commerce and manufactures of Ireland were, as the early Latin writers acquaint us, famed in all the marts and ports of Europe.



Composed from the Book of Kells.



### CHAPTER III.

#### THE FREE AND THE UNFREE CLANS—THE ROMANS AFRAID TO LAND IN IRELAND

During those fifteen hundred years preceding the Christian era, the other great nations of Europe, the Romans and the Greeks, were passing, by violent changes and bloody convulsions, through nearly every conceivable form of government—republics, confederations, empires, kingdoms, limited monarchies, despotisms, consulates, etc. During the like period (fifteen centuries) the one form of government, a limited monarchy, and the one dynasty, the Milesian, ruled in Ireland. The monarchy was elective, but elective out of the eligible members of the established or legitimate dynasty.

Indeed, the principle of "legitimacy," as it is sometimes called in our times—the hereditary right of a ruling family or dynasty—seems from the earliest ages to have been devotedly, we might almost say superstitiously, held by the Irish. Wars for the crown, and violent changes of rulers, were always frequent enough, but the wars and the changes were always between members of the ruling family or "blood royal"; and the two or three instances to the contrary that occur, are so singularly strong in their illustration of the fact to which we have adverted, that we will cite one of them here.

The Milesians and the earlier settlers never completely fused. Fifteen hundred years after the Milesian landing, the Firbolgs, the Tuatha de Danaans, and the Milesians were substantially distinct races or classes, the first being agriculturalists or tillers of the soil, the second manufacturers and merchants, the third soldiers and rulers. The exactions and oppressions of the ruling classes at one time became so grievous that in the reign succeeding that of Creivan the Second, who was the ninety-ninth Milesian monarch of Ireland, a wide-spread conspiracy was organized for the overthrow and extirpation of the Milesian princes and aristocracy. After three years of secret preparation, everything being ready, the royal and noble Milesian families, one and all, were invited to a "monster meeting" for games, exhibitions, feasting, etc., on the plain of Knock Ma, in the county of Galway. The great spectacle had lasted nine days, when suddenly the

Milesians were set upon by the Attacotti (as the Latin chroniclers called the conspirators), and massacred to a man. Of the royal line there escaped, however, three princes, yet unborn. Their mothers, wives of Irish princes, were the daughters respectively of the kings of Scotland, Saxony and Britany. They succeeded in escaping into Albion, where the three young princes were born and educated. The successful conspirators raised to the throne Carbry the First, who reigned five years, during which time, say the chronicles, the country was a prey to every misfortune; the earth refused to yield, the waters had no fish, the cattle gave no milk, the trees bore no fruit, and "the oak had but one acorn." Carbry was succeeded by his son, Moran, whose name deservedly lives in Irish history as "Moran the Just." He refused to wear the crown, which belonged, he said, to the royal line that had been so miraculously preserved; and he urged that the rightful princes, who by this time had grown to man's estate, should be recalled. Moran's powerful pleading commended itself readily to the popular conscience, already disquieted by the misfortunes and evil omens which, as the people read them, had fallen upon the land since the legitimate line had been so dreadfully cut down. The young princes were recalled from exile, and one of them, Faradah the Righteous, was, amidst great rejoicing, elected king of Ireland. Moran was appointed chief judge of Erin, and under his administration of justice the land long presented a scene of peace, happiness and contentment. To the gold chain of office which Moran wore on the judgment seat, the Irish for centuries subsequently attached supernatural powers. It was said that it would tighten around the neck of the judge if he was unjustly judging a cause.

The dawn of Christianity found the Romans masters of nearly the whole of the known world. Britain, after a short struggle, succumbed, and eventually learned to love the yoke. Gaul, after a gallant effort, was also overpowered and held as a conquered province. But upon Irish soil the Roman eagles were never planted. Of Ireland, or Ierne, as they called it, of its great wealth and amazing beauty of scenery and richness of soil, the all-conquering Romans heard much. But they had heard also that the fruitful and beautiful island was peopled by a soldier race, and, judging them by the few who occasionally crossed to Alba to help their British neighbors, and whose prowess and skill the imperial legions had betimes to

prove, the conquest of Ierne was wisely judged by the Romans to be a work better not attempted.

The early centuries of the Christian era may be considered the period pre-eminently of Pagan bardic or legendary fame in Ireland. In this, which we call the "Ossianic" period, lived Cúhal or Cúmbhal, father of the celebrated Fin Mac Cumhal, and commander of the great Irish legion called the Fiana Erion, or Irish militia. The Ossianic poems recount the most marvelous stories of Fin and the Fiana Erion which are compounds of undoubted facts and manifest fictions, the prowess of the heroes being in the course of time magnified into the supernatural, and the figures and poetic allegories of the earlier bards gradually coming to be read as realities. Some of these poems are gross, extravagant and absurd. Others of them are of rare beauty, and are, moreover, valuable for the insight they give, though obliquely, into the manners and customs, thoughts, feelings, guiding principles, and moving passions of the ancient Irish.



Composed from the Book of Kells.



## CHAPTER IV.

### KING CORMAC THE FIRST—NIAL OF THE NINE HOSTAGES.

As early as the reign of Ardi-Ri Cormac the First—the first years of the third century—the Christian faith had penetrated into Ireland. Probably in the commercial intercourse between the Irish and continental ports, some Christian converts had been amongst the Irish navigators or merchants. Some historians think the monarch himself, Cormac, towards the end of his life, adored the true God, and attempted to put down druidism. “His reign,” says Mr. Haverty, the historian, “is generally looked upon as the brightest epoch in the entire history of pagan Ireland. He established three colleges; one for War, one for History, and one for Jurisprudence. He collected and remodeled the laws, and published the code which remained in force until the English invasion (a period extending beyond nine hundred years), and outside the English Pale for many centuries after. He assembled the bards and chroniclers at Tara, and directed them to collect the annals of Ireland and to write out the records of the country from year to year, making them synchronize with the history of other countries, by collating events with the reigns of contemporary foreign potentates; Cormac himself having been the inventor of this chronology. These annals formed what is called the “Psalter of Tara,” which also contained full details of the boundaries of provinces, districts, and small divisions of land throughout Ireland; but unfortunately this great record has been lost, no vestige of it being now, it is believed, in existence. The magnificence of Cormac’s palace at Tara was commensurate with the greatness of his power and the brilliancy of his actions; and he fitted out a fleet which he sent to harass the shores of Alba, or Scotland, until that country also was compelled to acknowledge him as sovereign. He wrote a book or tract called Teagusena-Ri, or the “Institutions of a Prince,” which is still in existence, and which contains admirable maxims on manners, morals and government. This illustrious sovereign died A. D. 266, at Cleitach, on the Boyne, a salmon bone, it is said, having fastened in his throat while dining, and defied all efforts of extraction. He was buried at Ross-na-ri, the first of the pagan



monarchs who was not interred at Brugh, the famous burial place of the pre-Christian kings.

In the two centuries succeeding, there flourished amongst other sovereigns of Ireland less known to fame, the celebrated Niall of the Nine Hostages, and King Dahi. During these two hundred years the flag of Ireland waved through continental Europe over victorious legions and fleets; the Irish monarchs leading powerful armies across the plains of Gaul, and up to the very confines of "the Cæsar's domains" in Italy. It was the day of Ireland's military power in Europe; a day which subsequently waned so disastrously, and, later on, set in utter gloom. Neighboring Britain, whose yoke a thousand years subsequently Ireland was to wear, then lay helpless and abject at the mercy of the Irish hosts; the Britons, as history relates, absolutely weeping and wailing at the departure of the enslaving Roman legions, because now there would be naught to stay the visits of the Scotti, or Irish, and the Picts. The courts of the Irish princes and homes of the Irish nobility were filled with white slave attendants, brought from abroad, some from Gaul, but most from Anglia. It was in this way the youthful Patricius, or Patrick, was brought a slave into Ireland from Gaul. As the power of Imperial Rome began to pale, and outlying legions were being every year drawn in nearer and nearer to the city itself, the Irish sunburst blazed over the scene, and the retreating Romans found the cohorts of Erin pushing dauntlessly and vengefully on their track.

Although the Irish chroniclers of the period themselves say little of the deeds of the armies abroad, the continental records of the time give us pretty full insight into the part they played on the European stage in that day. Niall of the Nine Hostages met his death in Gaul, on the banks of the Loire, while leading his armies in one of those campaigns.

Of these foreign expeditions Ireland was destined to be indebted for her own conquest by the spirit of Christianity.







ST. PATRICK GOING TO TARA.

## CHAPTER V.

### ST. PATRICK IN IRELAND.

As we have already mentioned, in one of the military excursions of King Niall the First, into Gaul, he captured and brought to Ireland amongst other white slaves, Patricius, a Roman-Gallic youth of good family, and his sisters, Darerca and Lupita. The story of St. Patrick's bondage in Ireland, of his miraculous escape, his entry into holy orders, his vision of Ireland—in which he thought he heard the cries of a multitude of people, entreating him to come to them in Erin—his long studies under St. Germain, and eventually his determination to undertake in an especial manner the conversion of the Irish, will all be found in any Irish Church History or Life of St. Patrick. Having received the sanction and benediction of the holy pontiff, Pope Celestine, and having been consecrated bishop, St. Patrick, accompanied by a few chosen priests, reached Ireland in 432. Christianity had been preached in Ireland long before St. Patrick's time. In 431 St. Palladius, Archdeacon of Rome, was sent by Pope Celestine as a bishop to the Christians in Ireland. These, however, were evidently but few in number, and worshipped only in fear or secrecy. The attempt to preach the faith openly to the people was violently suppressed, and St. Palladius sailed from Ireland. St. Patrick and his missionaries landed on the spot where now stands the fashionable watering place called Bray, near Dublin. The hostility of the Lagenian prince and people compelled him to re-embark. He sailed northwards, touching at Innis-Patrick, near Skerries, county Dublin, and eventually landed at Magh Innis, in Strangford Lough.

Druidism would appear to have been the form of paganism then prevailing in Ireland, though even then some traces remained of a still more ancient idol-worship, probably dating from the time of the Tuatha de Danaans, two thousand years before. St. Patrick, however, found the Irish mind much better prepared, by its comparative civilization and refinement, to receive the truths of Christianity, than that of any other nation in Europe outside Imperial Rome. The Irish were always—then as they are now—pre-eminently a reverential people, and thus were peculiarly susceptible of religious truth.

St. Patrick's progress through the island was marked by success from the outset. Tradition states that, expounding the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, he used a little sprig of trefoil, or three-leaved grass, whence the Shamrock comes to be the National Emblem, as St. Patrick is the National Saint, or Patron of Ireland.

Ard-Rí Laori was holding a druidical feast in Tara, at which the kindling of a great fire formed a chief feature of the proceedings, and it was a crime punishable with death for any one to light a fire in the surrounding country on the evening of that festival, until the sacred flame on Tara Hill blazed forth. To his amazement, however, the monarch beheld on the Hill of Slane, visible from Tara, a bright light kindling early in the evening. This was the Paschal fire which St. Patrick and his missionaries had lighted, for it was Holy Saturday. The king sent for the chief druid, and pointed out to him on the distant horizon the flickering beam that so audaciously violated the sacred laws. The archpriest gazed long and wistfully on the spot, and eventually answered, "O, king, there is indeed a flame lighted on yonder hill, which, if it be not put out to-night, will never be quenched in Erin." Much disquieted by this oracular answer, Laori directed that the offenders, whoever they might be, should be instantly brought before him for punishment. St. Patrick, on being arrested, arrayed himself in his vestments, and, crozier in hand, marched boldly at the head of his captors, reciting aloud as he went along, a litany which is still extant, in which he invoked, "on that momentous day for Erin," the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, ever Blessed Mary the Mother of God, and the saints around the throne of heaven. Having arrived before the king and his assembled courtiers and druidical high priests, St. Patrick, undismayed, proclaimed to them that he had come to quench the fires of pagan sacrifice in Ireland, and light the flame of Christian faith. The king listened amazed and angered, yet no penalty fell on Patrick. On the contrary, he made several converts on the spot, and the sermon and controversy in the king's presence proved an auspicious beginning for the glorious mission upon which he had just entered.

It would fill a volume to chronicle the progress of the Saint through the island. Before his death, though only a few of the reigning princes had embraced the faith (for many years subsequently pagan kings ruled the country), the good



seeds had been sown far and wide, and were thriving apace, and the cross had been raised throughout Ireland, "from the centre to the sea." Ours was the only country in Europe, it is said, bloodlessly converted to the faith. Strictly speaking, only one martyr suffered death for the evangelization of Ireland, and death in this instance had been devised for the Saint himself. While St. Patrick was returning from Munster a pagan chieftain formed a desire to murder him. The plan came to the knowledge of Odran, the faithful charioteer of Patrick, who, saying nought of it to him, managed to change seats with the Saint, and thus received himself the fatal blow intended for his master.

Another authentic anecdote may be mentioned here. At the baptism of Aengus, King of Mononia or Munster, St. Patrick accidentally pierced through the sandal-covered foot of the king with his pastoral staff, which terminated into an iron spike, and which it was the Saint's custom to strike into the ground by his side, supporting himself more or less thereby, while preaching or baptizing. The king bore the wound without wincing, until the ceremony was over, when St. Patrick, with surprise and pain, beheld the ground covered with blood, and observed the cause. Being questioned by the Saint as to why he did not cry out, Aengus replied that he thought it was part of the ceremony, to represent, though faintly, the wounds our Lord had borne for man's redemption.

In the year of our Lord 493, on the 17th of March—which day is celebrated as his feast by the Catholic Church and by the Irish nation at home and in exile—St. Patrick departed this life in his favorite retreat of Saul, in the county of Down, where his body was interred. "His obsequies," say the old annalists, "continued for twelve days, during which the light of innumerable tapers seemed to turn night into day; and the bishops and priests of Ireland congregated on the occasion."

Several of the Saint's compositions, chiefly prayers and litanies, are extant. They breathe the most fervent devotion to the Virgin Mother of God, are full of the most powerful invocations of the saints, and in all other particulars are exactly such prayers and express such doctrines as are taught in our own day in the unchanged and unchangeable Catholic Church.





## CHAPTER VI.

### ANCIENT GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS OF THE COUNTRY—THE NATIONAL MILITIA—THE BREHON LAWS.

The geographical subdivisions of the country varied in successive centuries. The chief subdivision, the designations of which are most frequently used by the ancient chroniclers, was affected by a line drawn from the hill or ridge on the south bank of the Liffey, on the eastern end of which the Castle of Dublin is built, running due west to the peninsula of Marey, at the head of Galway Bay. The portion of Ireland south of this line was called *Leah Mola* ("Moh Nua's half"), the portion to the north of it, *Leah Cunn* ("Conn's half"). As these names suggest, this division of the island was first made between two princes, Conn of the Hundred Battles, and Moh Nua, or Eoghán Mor, otherwise Eugene the Great, the former being the head or chief representative of the Milesian families descended from Ir, the latter of those descended from Heber. Though the primary object of this partition was achieved but for a short time, the names thus given to the two territories are found in use, to designate the northern and southern halves of Ireland, for a thousand years subsequently.

Within these there were smaller subdivisions. The ancient names of the four provinces into which Ireland is divided were, *Mononia* (Munster), *Dalaradia*, or *Ulidia* (Ulster), *Lagenia* (Leinster), and *Conacia*, or *Conact* (Connaught). Again, *Mononia* was subdivided into *Thomond* and *Desmond*, *i. e.*, north and south Munster. Besides these names, the territory or district possessed by every set or clan had a designation of its own.

The chief palaces of the Irish kings, whose splendors are celebrated in Irish history, were: the palace of *Emania*, in Ulster, founded or built by Macha, queen of Cinbaeth the First (pronounced *Kimbahe*), about the year B. C. 700; *Tara* in Meath; *Cruachan*, in Conact, built by Queen Maeve, the beautiful albeit Amazonian Queen of the West, about the year B. C. 100; *Aileach*, in Donegal, built on the site of an ancient Sun-temple, or *Tuatha de Danaan* fort-palace.

*Kincora* had not at this time an existence, nor had it for some centuries subsequently. It was never more than the

local residence, a palatial castle, of Brian Boruma. It stood on the spot where now stands the town of Killaloe.

Emania, next to Tara the most celebrated of all royal palaces of Ancient Erin, stood on the spot now marked by a large rath called the Navan Fort, two miles to the west of Armagh. It was the residence of the Ulster kings for a period of 855 years.

The mound or Grianan of Ailceach, upon which, even for hundreds of years after the destruction of the place, the O'Donnells were elected, installed, or "inaugurated," is still an object of wonder and curiosity. It stands on the crown of a low hill by the shores of Lough Swilly, about five miles from Londonderry.

Royal Tara has been crowned with an imperishable fame in song and story. The entire crest and slopes of Tara Hill were covered with buildings at one time; for it was alone a royal palace, the residence of the *Ard-Ri* (or High King) of Erin, but, moreover, the legislative chambers, the military buildings, the law courts and royal universities that stood thereupon. Of all these, naught now remains but the moated mounds or raths that mark where stood the halls within which bard and warrior, ruler and lawgiver, once assembled in glorious pageant.

Of the orders of knighthood, or companionship of valor and chivalry, mentioned in pagan Irish history, the two principal were: the Knights of the (*Ctaev Rua*, or) Red Branch of Emania, and the *Clanna Morna*, or the Damnoian Knights of Iorras. The former were a Dalaradian, the latter a Conacian body; and, test the records how we may, it is incontrovertible that no chivalric institutions of modern times eclipsed in knightly valor and romantic daring those warrior companionships of ancient Erin.

Besides these orders of knighthood, several military legions figure familiarly and prominently in Irish history; but the most celebrated of them all, the Dalcassians—one of the most brave and "glory-crowned" bodies of which there is record in ancient and modern times—did not figure in Irish history until long after the commencement of the Christian era.

The *Fianna Eirion*, or National Militia of Erin, we have already mentioned. This celebrated enrollment had the advantage of claiming within its own ranks a warrior-poet, Ossian (son of the commander Fin), whose poems, taking for

their theme invariably the achievements and adventures of the Fenian host, or of its chiefs, have given to it a lasting fame. According to Ossian, there never existed upon the earth another such force of heroes as the Fianna Eirion; and the feats he attributes to them were of course unparalleled. He would have us believe there were no taller, straighter, stronger, braver, bolder, men in all Erin, than his Fenian comrades; and with the recital of their deeds he mixes up the wildest romance and fable. What is strictly true of them is, that at one period undoubtedly they were a splendid national force; but ultimately they became a danger rather than a protection to the kingdom, and had to be put down by the regular army in the reign of King Carbri the Second, who encountered and destroyed them finally on the bloody battle field of Gavra, about the year A. D. 280

Ben Eder, now called the Hill of Howth, near Dublin, was the camp or exercise ground of the Fianna Eirion when called out annually for training.

The laws of pagan Ireland, which were collected and codified in the reign of Cormac the First, and which prevailed throughout the kingdom as long subsequently as a vestige of native Irish regal authority remained—a space of nearly fifteen hundred years—are, even in this present age, exciting considerable attention amongst legislators and savants. A royal commission—the “Brehon Laws Commission”—appointed by the British government in the year 1856 (chiefly owing to the energetic exertions of Rev. Dr. Graves and Rev. Dr. Todd, of Trinity College, Dublin), has been laboring at their translation, parliament voting an annual sum to defray the expenses. Of course only portions of the original manuscripts are now in existence, but even these portions attest the marvellous wisdom and the profound justness of the ancient Milesian Code, and give us a high opinion of Irish jurisprudence two thousand years ago.

The Brehon Laws Commission published their first volume, the “Seanchus Mor,” in 1865, and a most interesting publication it is. Immediately on the establishment of Christianity in Ireland a royal commission of that day was appointed to revise the statute laws of Erin, so that they might be purged of everything applicable only to a pagan nation and inconsistent with the pure doctrines of Christianity. On this commission, we are told, there were appointed by the Irish monarch three chief Brehons or judges, three Christian bish-

ops, and three territorial chiefs or viceroys. The result of their labors was presented to the Irish parliament at Tara, and being duly confirmed, the code thenceforth became known as the Seanchus Mor.

From the earliest age the Irish appear to have been extremely fond of games, athletic sports, and displays of prowess or agility. Amongst the royal and noble families chess was the chief domestic game. There are indubitable proofs that it was played amongst the princes of Erin two thousand years ago; and the oldest bardic chants or verse-histories mention the gold and jewel inlaid chess boards of the kings.

Of the passionate attachment of the Irish to music, little need be said, as this is one of the national characteristics which has been at all times most strongly marked, and is now most widely appreciated; the harp being universally emblazoned as a national emblem of Ireland. Even in the pre-Christian period we are here reviewing, music was an "institution" and a power in Erin.



Composed from the Book of Kells.



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE GLORIOUS MUSTER ROLL OF IRISH SAINTS—COMING OF THE DANES

The five hundred years, one-half of which preceded the birth of our Lord, may be considered the period of Ireland's greatest power and military glory as a nation. The five hundred years which succeeded St. Patrick's mission may be regarded as the period of Ireland's Christian and scholastic fame. In the former she sent her warriors, in the latter her missionaries, all over Europe. Where her fierce hero-kings carried the sword, her saints now bore the cross of faith. It was in this latter period, between the sixth and the eighth centuries particularly, that Ireland became known all over Europe as the "Island of Saints and Scholars."

Churches, cathedrals, monasteries, convents, universities covered the island. From even the most distant parts of Europe, kings and their subjects came to study in the Irish schools. King Alfred the Great of England was educated in one of the Irish universities. A glorious roll of Irish saints and scholars belong to this period: St. Columba or Columcille, St. Columbanus, St. Gall, who evangelized Helvetia, St. Frigidian, who was bishop of Lucca in Italy, St. Lucinius, who was martyred in Flanders, St. Argobast, who became bishop of Strasburg, St. Killian, the apostle of Franconia, and quite a host of illustrious Irish missionaries, who carried the blessings of faith and education all over Europe. The record of their myriad adventurous enterprises, their glorious labors, their evangelising conquests, cannot be traced within the scope of this book.

The first dark cloud came from Scandinavia. Towards the close of the eighth century the Danes made their appearance in Ireland. They came at first as transitory coast marauders, landing and sacking a neighboring town, church or monastery. For this species of warfare the Irish seem to have been as little prepared as any of the European countries subjected to the like courage; that is to say, none of them but the Danes possessed at this period of history a powerful fleet. So when pirates had wreaked their will upon the city or monastery, in order to plunder which they had landed, they simply re-im-

barked and sailed away comparatively safe from molestation.

At length it seems to have occurred to the professional pirates that in place of making periodical dashes on the Irish coast, they might secure a permanent footing thereupon, and so prepare the way for eventually subjugating the entire kingdom. Accordingly they came in force and possessed themselves of several spots favorably placed for such purpose as theirs—sites for fortified maritime cities on estuaries affording good shelter for their fleets, viz, Dublin, Drogheda, Waterford, Limerick, Wexford, etc.

In the fourth year of Nial the Third (about the year A. D. 840), there arrived a monster fleet of these fierce and ruthless savages, under the command of Turgesius. They poured into the country and carried all before them. For nearly seven years Turgesius exercised over a considerable district kingly authority, and the Irish groaned under the horrors of oppression the most heartless and brutal. Turgesius converted the cathedral at Clonmacnoise into a palace for his own use, and from the high altar, used as a throne, the idolater gave forth his tyrannical commands. Meantime the Christian faith was proscribed, the Christian shrines were plundered, the gold and jewels were kept by the spoilers, but the holy relics were sacrilegiously given to destruction. The schools were dispersed, the books and chronicles burned, and finally the "successor of Patrick," the Archbishop of Armagh, was seized, the cathedral sacked, and the holy prelate brought a captive into the Danish stronghold.

But a day of retribution was at hand. The divided and disorganized tribes were being bitterly taught the necessity of union. These latest outrages were too much for Christian Irish flesh and blood to bear. Concerting their measures, the people simultaneously rose on the oppressors. Turgesius was seized and put to death by Malachy, prince of Westmeath, while the Irish Ard-Ri, Nial the Third, at length able to rally a powerful army against the invaders, swooped down upon them from the north, and drove them panic-stricken to their maritime fortresses, their track marked with slaughter. Nial seems to have been a really noble character, and the circumstances under which he met his death, sudden and calamitous, in the very midst of his victorious career, afford ample illustration of the fact. His army had halted on the banks of the Callan river, at the moment swollen by heavy rains. One of the royal domestics or attendants, a common Giolla. in en-

deavoring to ford the river for some purpose, was swept from his feet and carried off by the flood. The monarch, who happened to be looking on, cried aloud to his guards to succor the drowning man, but quicker than any other, he himself plunged into the torrent. He never rose again. The brave Nial, who had a hundred times faced death in the midst of reddened spears, perished in his effort to save the life of one of the humblest of his followers.

The power of the Danes was broken, but they still clung to the seaports, where either they were able to defy efforts at expulsion, or else obtained permission to remain by paying heavy tribute to the Irish sovereign. It is clear enough that the presence of the Danes came, in course of time, to be regarded as useful and profitable by the Irish, so long as they did not refuse tribute to the native power. The history of the succeeding centuries accordingly—the period of the Danish struggle—exhibits a singular spectacle. The Danes made themselves fully at home in the great maritime cities, which they may be said to have founded, and which their commerce certainly raised to importance. The Irish princes made alliances betimes with them, and Danes frequently fought on opposite sides in the internecine conflicts of the Irish princes. Occasionally seizing a favorable opportunity—(when the Irish were particularly weakened by internal feud, and when a powerful reinforcement for themselves arrived from Scandinavia)—they would make a fierce endeavor to extend their dominion on Irish soil. These efforts were mostly successful for a time, owing to the absence of a strong centralized authority amongst the Irish; but eventually the Irish, by putting forth their native valor, and even partially combining for the time, were always able to crush them.

Yet it is evident that during the three hundred years over which the Danish struggle spreads, the Irish nation was undergoing disintegration and demoralization. Towards the middle of the period, the Danes became converted to Christianity; but their coarse and fierce barbarism remained long after, and it is evident that contact with such elements, and increasing political disruption among themselves, had a fatal effect on the Irish. They absolutely retrograded in learning and civilization during this time, and contracted some of the worst vices that could pave the way for the fate that a few centuries more were to bring upon them.

National pride may vainly seek to ignore or hide the great

truth here displayed. During the three hundred years which preceded the Anglo-Norman invasion, the Irish princes appeared to be given over to a madness for destruction. At a time when consolidation of national authority was becoming the rule all over Europe, and was becoming so necessary for them, they were going into the other extreme. As the general rule, each one sought only his personal or family ambition or aggrandisement, and strove for it lawlessly and violently. Frequently when the Ardi-Ri of Erin was nobly grappling with the Danish foe, and was on the point of finally expelling the foreigner, a subordinate prince would seize what seemed to him the golden opportunity for throwing off the authority of the chief king, or for treacherously endeavoring to grasp it himself. During the whole time—three centuries—there was scarcely a single reign in which the Ardi-Ri did not find occupation for his arms as constantly in compelling the submission of the subordinate princes, as in combating the Danish foe.

Religion itself suffered in this national declension. In these centuries we find professedly Christian Irish kings themselves as ruthless destroyers of churches and schools as the pagan Danes of a few years previous. The titles of the Irish episcopacy were sometimes seized by lay princes for the sake of the revenues attached to them; the spiritual functions of the officers, however, being performed by ecclesiastics meanwhile. In fine, the Irish national character in those centuries is to be censured, not admired. It would seem as if by adding sacrilege and war upon religion and on learning to political suicide and a fatal frenzy of factiousness, the Irish princes of that period were doing their best and their worst to shame the glories of their nation in the preceding thousand years, and to draw down upon the country the terrible chastisement that eventually befell it, a chastisement that never could have befallen it, but for the state of things we are here pointing out.

Yet was this gloomy period lit up by some brilliant flashes of glory, the brightest, if not the last, being that which surrounds the name of Clontarf, where the power of the Danes in Ireland was crushed totally and forever.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### REIGN OF THE CELEBRATED KING, BRIAN BORU.

Few historical names are more widely known amongst Irishmen than that of Brian the First—"Brian of the 'Tribute'"—and the story of his life is a necessary and an interesting introduction to an account of the battle of Clontarf.

About the middle of the tenth century the crown of Munster was worn by Mahon, son of Cemeidi (pr. Kennedy), a prince of the Dalcassian family. Mahon had a young brother, Brian, and by all testimony the affection which existed between the brothers was something touching. Mahon, who was a noble character—"as a prince and captain in every way worthy of his inheritance"—was accompanied in all expeditions, and from an early age by Brian, to whom he acted not only as a brother and prince, but as military preceptor. After a brilliant career, Mahon fell by a deed of deadly treachery. A rival prince of South Munster—"Molloy, son of Bran, Lord of Desmond"—whom he had vanquished, proposed to meet him in friendly conference at the house of Donovan, a Eugenian chief. The safety of each person was guaranteed by the Bishop of Cork, who acted as mediator between them. Mahon, chivalrous and unsuspecting, went unattended and unarmed to the conference. He was seized by an armed band of Donovan's men, who handed him over to a party of Molloy's retainers, by whom he was put to death. He had with him, as the sacred and (as it ought to have been) inviolable "safe-conduct" on the faith of which he had trusted himself into the power of his foes, a copy of the Gospels written by the hand of St. Baire. As the assassins drew their swords upon him, Mahon snatched up the sacred scroll, and held it on his breast, as if he could not credit that a murderous hand would dare to wound him through such a shield. But the murderers plunged their swords into his breast, piercing right through the vellum, which became all stained and matted with blood. Two priests had, horror-stricken, witnessed the outrage. They caught up the blood-stained Gospels and fled to the bishop, spreading through the country as they went the dreadful news which they bore. The venerable suc-



cessor of St. Fin Bar, we are told, wept bitterly and uttered a prophecy concerning the fate of the murderers, which was soon and remarkably fulfilled.

"When the news of his noble-hearted brother's death was brought to Brian at Kincora, he was seized with the most violent grief. His favorite harp was taken down, and he sang the death-song of Mahon, recounting all the glorious actions of his life. His anger flashed out through his tears as he wildly chanted—

"My heart shall burst within my breast,  
Unless I avenge this great king,  
They shall forfeit life for this foul deed,  
Or I must perish by a violent death."

"But the climax of his grief was, that Mahon had not fallen behind the shelter of his shield, rather than trust the treacherous word of Donovan." A "Bard of Thomond," in our own day—one not unworthy of his proud pseudonym—Mr. M. Hogan of Limerick, has supplied the following very beautiful version of "Brian's Lament for King Mahon":—

Lament, O Dalcassians, the Eagle of Cashel is dead.  
The grandeur, the glory, and joy of her palace is fled;  
Your strength in the battle—your bulwark of valor is low,  
But the fire of your vengeance will fall on the murderous foe;

His country was mighty—his people were blest in his reign,  
But the ray of his glory shall never shine on them again;  
Like the beauty of summer his presence gave joy to our souls,  
When Bards sung his deeds at the banquet of bright golden  
bowls.

Ye maids of Temora, whose rich garments sweep the green  
plain;  
Ye chiefs of the Sunburst, the terror and scourge of the Dane;  
Ye gray-haired Ard-Fileas, whose songs fire the blood of the  
brave;  
Oh: weep, for your Sun-Star is quenched in the night of the  
grave.

He clad you with honors—he filled your high hearts with  
delight,  
In the midst of your councils he beamed in his wisdom and  
might,  
Gold, silver, and jewels were only as dust in his hand,  
But his sword like a lightning-flash blasted the foe of his land.

Oh: Mahon, my brother, we've conquered and marched side  
by side,  
And thou wert to the love of my soul like a beautiful bride;  
In the battle, the banquet, the council, the chase and the throne,  
Our beings were blended—our spirits were filled with one tone

Oh: Mahon, my brother; thou'st died like the hind of the wood,  
The hands of assassins were red with thy pure, noble blood;  
And I was not near, my beloved, when thou wert o'erpower'd,  
To steep in their hearts' blood the steel of my blue-beaming  
sword.

I stood by the dark, misty river at eve dim and gray,  
And I heard the death-cry of the spirit of gloomy Craghlea;  
She repeated thy name in her *caoine* of desolate woe,  
Then I knew that the Beauty and Joy of Clan Tail was laid  
low

All day and all night one dark vigil of sorrow I keep,  
My spirit is bleeding with wounds that are many and deep;  
My banquet is anguish, tears, groaning, and wringing of  
hands,  
In madness lamenting my Prince of the gold-hilted brands.

O God: give me patience to bear the affliction I feel,  
But for every hot tear a red blood-drop shall blush on my  
steel;  
For every deep pang which my grief-stricken spirit has known,  
A thousand death-wounds in the day of revenge shall atone.

And he smote the murderers of his brother with a swift and  
terrible vengeance. Mustering his Dalcassian legions, which  
so often with Mahon he had led to victory, he set forth upon  
the task of retribution. His first effort, the old records tell  
us, was directed against the Danes of Limerick, who were  
Donovan's allies, and he slew Ivor, their king, and his two

sons. Foreseeing their fate, they had fled before him, and had taken refuge in "Scattery's Holy Isle." But Brian slew them even "between the horns of the altar." Next came the turn of Donovan, who had meantime hastily gathered to his aid the Danes of South Munster. But "Brian," say the Annaals of Innis fallen, "gave them battle, and Auliffe and his Danes, and Donovan and his allies were all cut off." Of all guilty in the murder of the brother whom he so loved, there now remained but one—the principal—Molloy, son of Bran. After the fashion in those times, Brian sent Molloy a formal summons or citation to meet him in battle until the terrible issue between them should be settled. To this Molloy responded by confederating all the Irish and the Danes of South Munster whom he could rally, for yet another encounter with the avenging Dalcassian. But the curse of the Comharba of St. Barre was upon the murderers of Mahon, and the might of a passionate vengeance was in Brian's arm. Again he was victorious. The confederated Danes and Irish were overthrown with great slaughter; Brian's son, Morrogh, then a mere lad, "killing the murderer of his uncle Mahon with his own hand." "Molloy was buried on the north side of the mountain where Mahon had been murdered and interred: on Mahon the sun shone full and fair; but on the grave of his assassin the black shadow of the northern sky rested always. Such was the tradition which all Munster piously believed. After his victory Brian was universally acknowledged king of Munster, and until Ard-Ri Malachy won the battle of Tara, was justly considered the first Irish captain of his age."

This was the opening chapter of Brian's career. Thenceforth his military reputation and his political influence are found extending far beyond the confines of Munster.

The supreme crown of Ireland at this time was worn by a brave and enlightened sovereign, Malachy the Second, or Malachy Mor. He exhibited rare qualities of statesmanship, patriotism, and valor in his vigorous efforts against the Danes. On the occasion of one of his most signal victories over them, he himself engaged in combat two Danish princes, overcame and slew both of them, taking from off the neck of one a massive collar of gold, and from the grasp of the other a jewel-hilted sword, which he himself thenceforward wore as trophies. To this monarch, and to the incident here mentioned, Moore alludes in his well-known lines:—

Let Erin remember the days of old,  
Ere her faithless sons betrayed her,  
When Malachy wore the collar of gold  
Which he won from the proud invader.

Whether it was that Ard-Ri Malachy began to fear the increasing and almost overshadowing power and influence of his southern tributary, or that Brian had in his pride of strength refused to own his tributary position, it seems impossible to tell; but unfortunately for Ireland the brave and wise Ard-Ri Malachy, and the not less brave and wise tributary Brian, became embroiled in a bitter war, the remote but indubitable consequences of which most powerfully and calamitously affected the future destinies of Ireland. For nearly twenty years the struggle between them continued. Any adversary less able than Malachy would have been quickly compelled to succumb to ability such as Brian's; and it may on the other hand be said that it was only a man of Brian's marvellous powers whom Malachy could not effectively crush in as many months. Two such men united could accomplish anything with Ireland; and when they eventually did unite, they absolutely swept the Danes into their walled and fortified cities, from whence they had begun once more to overrun the country during the distractions of the struggle between Malachy and Brian. During the short peace or truce between himself and the Ard-Ri, Brian—who was a sagacious diplomatist as well as great general—seems to have attached to his interest nearly all the tributary kings, and subsequently even the Danish princes; so that it was easy to see that already his eye began to glance at the supreme crown. Malachy saw it all, and when the decisive moment at last arrived, and Brian, playing Cæsar, “crossed the Rubicon,” the now only titular Ard-Ri made a gallant but brief defence against the ambitious usurper—for such Brian was on the occasion. After this short effort Malachy yielded with dignity and calmness to the inevitable, and gave up the monarchy of Erin to Brian. The abdicated sovereign thenceforward served under his victorious rival as a subordinate, with a readiness and fidelity which showed him to be Brian's superior at least in unselfish patriotism and in readiness to sacrifice personal pride and personal rights to the public interests of his country.

Brian, now no longer king of Munster, but Ard-Ri of



Brian, found his ambition fully crowned. The power and authority to which he had thus attained, he wielded with a wisdom, a sagacity, a firmness, and a success that made his reign as *Ard-Ri*, while it lasted, one of almost unsurpassed glory, prosperity, and happiness for Ireland. Yet the student of Irish history finds no fact more indelibly marked on his mind by the thoughtful study of the great page before him, than this, namely, that, glorious as was Brian's reign—brave, generous, noble, pious, learned, accomplished, politic, and wise, as is confessed on all hands to have been—his seizure of the supreme national crown was a calamity for Ireland. Or, rather, perhaps, it would be more correct and more just to say, that having reference not singly to his ambitious seizure of the national crown, but also to the loss in one day of his own life and the lives of his next heirs (both son and grandson), the event resulted calamitously for Ireland. For "it threw open the sovereignty to every great family as a prize to be won by policy or force, and no longer an inheritance to be determined by law and usage. The consequences were what might have been expected. After his death the O'Connors of the West competed with both O'Neills and O'Briens for supremacy, and a chronic civil war prepared the way for Strongbow and the Normans.

"The term, 'kings and opposition' is applied to nearly all who reigned between King Brian's time and that of Roderic O'Connor" (the Norman invasion), "meaning thereby kings who were unable to secure general obedience to their administration of affairs."

Brian, however, in all probability, as the historian we have quoted pleads in his behalf, might have been moved by the great and statesmanlike scheme of consolidating and fusing Ireland into one kingdom; gradually repressing individuality in the subordinate principalities, and laying the firm foundation of an enduring and compact monarchical state, of which his own posterity would be the sovereigns. "For Morrogh, his first-born, and for Morrogh's descendants he hoped to found an hereditary kingship after the type universally copied throughout Christendom. He was not ignorant of what Alfred had done for England, Harold for Norway, Charlemagne for France, and Otho for Germany." If any such design really inspired Brian's course, it was a grandly useful one, comprehensive, and truly national. Its realization was just what Ireland wanted at that period of her



history. But its existence in Brian's mind is a most fanciful theory. He was himself, while a tributary king, no wondrous friend or helper of centralised authority. He pushed from the throne a wise and worthy monarch. He grasped at the sceptre, not in a reign of anarchy, but in a period of comparative order, authority, and tranquillity.

Be that as it may, certain it is that Brian was "every inch a king." Neither on the Irish throne, nor on that of any other kingdom, did sovereign ever sit more splendidly qualified to rule; and Ireland had not for some centuries known such a glorious and prosperous, peaceful and happy time as the five years preceding Brian's death. He caused his authority to be not only unquestioned, but obeyed and respected in every corner of the land. So justly were the laws administered in his name, and so loyally obeyed throughout the kingdom, that the bards relate a rather fanciful story of a young and exquisitely beautiful lady, making, without the slightest apprehension of violence or insult, and in perfect safety, a tour of the island on foot, alone and unprotected, though bearing about her the most costly jewels and ornaments of gold. A national minstrel of our own times has celebrated this illustration of the tranquillity of Brian's reign in the well-known poem, "Rich and rare were the gems she wore."



Sculpture on Window. Cathedral Church, Glendalough; Beranger, 1779.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers."



## CHAPTER IX.

### DARK TIMES IN IRELAND.

About this time the Danish power all over Europe had made considerable advances. In France it had fastened itself upon Normandy, and in England it had once more become victorious, the Danish prince, Sweyne, having been proclaimed king of England in 1013, though it was not until the time of his successor, Canute, that the Danish line were undisputed monarchs of England. All these triumphs made them turn their attention the more earnestly to Ireland, which they so often and so desperately, yet so vainly, sought to win. At length the Danes of this country—holding several of the large sea-port cities, but yielding tribute to the Irish monarch—seem to have been roused to the design of rallying all the might of the Scanian race for one gigantic and supreme effort to conquer the kingdom; for it was a reflection hard for Northmen to endure, that they who had conquered England almost as often as they tried, who had now placed a Danish sovereign on the English throne, and had established a Danish dukedom of Normandy in France, had never yet been able to bring this dearly-coveted western isle into subjection, and had never yet given a monarch to its line of kings. Coincidentally with the victories of Sweyne in England, several Danish expeditions appeared upon the Irish coast: now at Cork in the south, now at Lough Foyle in the north; but these were promptly met and repelled by the vigor of the *Ard-Ri*, or of the local princes. These forays, however, though serious and dangerous enough, were but the prelude to the forthcoming grand assault, or as it has been aptly styled, “the last field-day of Christianity and Paganism on Irish soil.”

“A taunt thrown out over a game of chess at Kincora is said to have hastened this memorable day. Maelmurra, prince of Leinster, playing or advising on the game, made or recommended a false move, upon which Morrogh, son of Brian, observed, it was no wonder the Danes (to whom he owed his elevation) were beaten at Glenmana, if he gave them advice like that. Maelmurra, highly incensed by the allusion—all the more severe for its bitter truth—arose, ordered his horse, and rode away in haste. Brian, when he

heard it, despatched a messenger after the indignant guest, begging him to return; but Maelmurra was not to be pacified, and refused. We next hear of him as concerting with certain Danish agents, always open to such negotiations, those measures which led to the great invasion of the year 1014, in which the whole Scanian race, from Anglesea and Man, north to Norway, bore an active share.

These agents passing over to England and Man, among the Scottish isles, and even to the Baltic, followed up the design of an invasion on the gigantic scale. Suibne, earl of Man, entered warmly into this conspiracy, and sent the 'war-arrow' through all those 'out-islands' which obeyed him as lord. A yet more formidable potentate, Sigurd, of the Orkneys, next joined the league. He was the fourteenth earl of Orkney, of Norse origin, and his power was, at this period, a balance to that of his nearest neighbor, the king of Scots. He had ruled since the year 966, not only over the Orkneys, Shetland, and Northern Hebrides, but the coasts of Caithness and Sutherland, and even Ross and Moray rendered him homage and tribute. Eight years before the battle of Clontarf, Malcolm the Second of Scotland had been fain to purchase his alliance by giving him his daughter in marriage, and the kings of Denmark and Norway treated with him on equal terms.

The hundred inhabited isles, which lie between Yell and Man—isles which after their conversion contained 'three hundred churches and chapels'—sent in their contingents, to swell the following of the renowned earl Sigurd. As his fleet bore southward from Kirkwall it swept the subject coast of Scotland, and gathered from every lough its galleys and its fighting men. The rendezvous was the Isle of Man, where Suibne had placed his own forces, under the command of Brodar, or Broderick, a famous leader against the Britons of Wales and Cornwall. In conjunction with Sigurd, the Manxmen sailed over to Ireland, where they were joined, in the Liffey, by Earl Canuteson, prince of Denmark, at the head of fourteen hundred champions clad in armor. Sitric of Dublin stood, or affected to stand, neutral in these preparations, but Maelmurra of Leinster had mustered all the forces he could command for such an expedition." (McGee.)

Here was a mighty thunderstorm gathering over and around Ireland. Never before was an effort of such magnitude made for the conquest of the island. Never before had the Danish power so palpably put forth its utmost strength,

and never hitherto had it put forth such strength in vain. This was the supreme moment for Ireland to show what she could do when united in self-defense against a foreign invader. Here were the unconquered Northmen, the scourge and terror of Europe, the conquerors of Britain, Normandy, Anglesea, Orkney, and Man, now concentrating the might of their whole race, from fiord to haven, from the Orkneys to the Sicily Isles, to burst in an overwhelming billow upon Ireland. If before a far less formidable assault England went down, dare Ireland hope now to meet and withstand this tremendous shock? In truth, it seemed a hard chance. It was a trial-hour for the men of Eriinn. And gloriously did they meet it: Never for an instant were they daunted by the tidings of the extensive and mighty preparations going forward; for the news filled Europe, and a hundred harbors in Norway, Denmark, France, England, and the Channel Isles resounded day and night with the bustle preparatory to the coming of war. Brian was fully equal to the emergency. He resolved to meet force by force, combination by combination, preparation by preparation; to defy the foe and let them see "what Irishmen could do." His efforts were nobly seconded by the zeal of all the tributary princes (with barely a few exceptions), but most nobly of all by the deposed Malachy, whose conduct upon this occasion alone would entitle him to a proud place in the annals of Ireland. In one of the preliminary expeditions of the Danes a few years previously, he detected more quickly than Brian the seriousness of the work going forward; he sent word immediately to Kincora that the Danes, who had landed near Dublin, were marching inward, and entreated Brian to hasten to check them promptly. The Ard-Ri, however, was at that time absolutely incredulous that anything more serious than a paltry foray was designed, and he refused, it is said, to lend any assistance to the local prince. But Malachy had a truer conception of the gravity of the case. He himself marched to meet the invaders, and in a battle which ensued, routed them, losing, however, in the hour of victory his son Flann. This engagement awakened Brian to a sense of the danger at hand. He quickly despatched an auxiliary force, under his son Morrogh, to Malachy's aid; but the Danes, driven within their walled city of Dublin by Malachy, did not venture out; and so the Dalcassian force returned southwards, devastating the territory of the traitor Maelmorha, of Leinster, whose perfidy was now openly proclaimed.





## CHAPTER X.

### THE DANES CRUSHED—IRELAND VICTORIOUS AT CLONTARF.

Brian soon became fully aware of the scheme at which the Danes all over Europe were laboring, and of the terrible trial approaching for Ireland. Through all the autumn of that year, 1013, and the spring months of the year following, the two powers, Danish and Irish, were working hard at preparations for the great event, each straining every energy and summoning every resource for the crisis. Towards the end of March, Brian's arrangements being completed, he gave the order for a simultaneous march to Kilmainham, usually the camping ground at that time of the national forces. By the second week in April there had rallied to the national standard a force which, if numerically unequal to that assembled by the invaders, was, as the result showed, able to compensate by superior valor for whatever it lacked in numbers. The lords of all the southern half of the kingdom—the lords of Decies, Inchuquin, Fermoy, Corca-Baiskin, Kinalmeaky, and Kerry—and the lords of Hy-Mani and Hi-Fiachra in Connacht, we are told, hastened to Brian's standard. O'More and O'Nolan of Leinster, and Donald, Steward of Marr, in Scotland, continues the historian, "were the other chieftains who joined him before Clontarf, besides those of his own kindred," or the forces proper of Thomond. Just one faint shadow catches the eye as we survey the picture presented by Ireland in the hour of this great national rally. The northern chieftains, the lords of Ulster, alone held back. Sullen and silent they stirred not. "They had submitted to Brian, but they never cordially supported him."

The great Danish flotilla, under Brodar, the admiral-in-chief, entered Dublin Bay on Palm Sunday, the 18th of April, 1014. The galleys anchored, some at Sutton, near Howth, others were moored in the mouth of the river Liffey, and the rest were beached or anchored in a vast line stretching along the Clontarf shore, which sweeps between the two points indicated. Brian immediately swung his army round upon Glasnevin, crossed the Tolka at the point where the Botanical Gardens now stand, and faced his line of battle southward towards where the enemy were planted, or encamped upon the

shore. Meantime, becoming aware that Maelmorha, prince of Leinster, was so eager to help the invader that he had entered the Danish camp with every man of his following, Brian secretly despatched a body of Dalcassians, under his son Donagh, to dash into the traitors' territory and waste it with fire and sword. The secret march southward of the Dalcassians was communicated to Maelmorha by a spy in Brian's camp, and, inasmuch as the Dalcassians were famed as the "invincible legion" of the Irish army, the traitor urged vehemently upon his Danish allies that this was the moment to give battle—while Brian's best troops were away. Accordingly, on Holy Thursday, the Danes announced their resolution to give battle next day. Brian had the utmost reluctance to fight upon that day, which would be Good Friday, thinking it almost a profanation to engage in combat upon the day on which our Lord died for man's redemption. He begged that the engagement might be postponed even one day; but the Danes were all the more resolute to engage on the next morning, for, says an old legend of the battle, Brodar, having consulted one of the Danish pagan oracles, was told that if he gave battle upon the Friday *Brian would fall*.

With early dawn next day, Good Friday, 23rd of April, 1014, all was bustle in both camps. The Danish army, facing inland, northwards or northeast, stretched along the shore of Dublin Bay, its left flank touching and protected by the city of Dublin, its center being about the spot where Clontarf Castle now stands, and its right wing resting on Dollymount. The Irish army, facing southwards, had its right on Drumcondra, its center on Fairview, and its extreme left on Clontarf. The Danish forces were disposed of in three divisions, of which the first, or left, was composed of the Danes of Dublin, under their king, Sitric, and the princes Dolat and Conneal, with the thousand Norwegians already mentioned as clothed in suits of ringed mail, under the youthful warriors Carlus and Anrud; the second, or central division, was composed chiefly of the Lagenians, commanded by Maelmorha himself, and the princes of Offaly and of the Liffey territory; and the third division, or right wing, was made up of the auxiliaries from the Baltic and the Islands, under Brodar, with some British auxiliaries from Wales and Cornwall. To oppose these the Irish monarch also marshalled his forces in three corps or divisions. The first, or right wing, composed chiefly of the diminished legions of the brave Dalcassians,

was under the command of his son Morrogh, who had also with him his four brothers, Teige, Donald, Conor, and Flann, and his own son (grandson of Brian), the youthful Torlogh, who was but fifteen years of age. In this division also fought Malachy with the Meath contingent. The Irish center division composed the troops of Desmond, or South Munster, under the command of Kiam, son of Molloy, and Donel, son of Duv Davoren (ancestor of the O'Donoghue), both of the Eugenic line. The Irish left wing was composed mainly of the forces of Connaught, under O'Kelley, prince of Hy-Manie (the great central territory of Connact); O'Heyne, prince of Hy-Fiachra Ahna, and Echtigern, king of Dalaradia. It is supposed that Brian's army numbered about 20,000 men.

All being ready for the signal of battle, Brian himself, mounted on a richly-caparisoned charger, rode through the Irish lines, as all the records are careful to tell us, "with his sword in one hand, and a crucifix in the other," exhorting the troops to remember the momentous issues that depended upon the fortunes of that day—Religion and Country against Paganism and bondage. It is said, that on this occasion he delivered an address which moved his soldiers, now to tears, and anon to the utmost pitch of enthusiasm and resolution. And we can well imagine the effect, upon an army drawn up as they were for the onset of battle in defence of "Faith and Fatherland," of such a sight and such an appeal—their aged and venerable monarch, "his white hair floating in the wind," riding through their lines, with the sacred symbol of Redemption borne aloft, and adjuring them, as the chronicles tell us, to "*remember that on this day Christ died for us, on the Mount of Calvary.*" Moreover, Brian himself had given them an earnest, such perhaps as monarch had never given before, of his resolve, that with the fortunes of his country he and his sons and kinsmen all would stand or fall. He had brought "his sons and nephews there," says the historian, who might have added, and even his grandchildren," and showed that he was prepared to let existence of his race depend upon the issue of the day." We may be sure a circumstance so affecting as this was not lost upon Brian's soldiers. It gave force to every word of his address. He recounted, we are told, all the barbarities and the sacrileges perpetrated by the invaders in their lawless ravages on Irish soil, the shrines they had plundered, the holy relics they had profaned, the brutal cruelties they had inflicted on unarmed non-combatants—nay, on "the

servants of the Altar." Then, raising the crucifix aloft, he invoked the Omnipotent God to look down upon them that day, and to strengthen their arms in a cause so just and holy.

Mr. William Kenealy is the author of a truly noble poem which gives all the native vigor and force of the original—this thrilling "Address of King Brian to his Army":

Stand ye now for Erin's glory! Stand ye now for Erin's cause!  
Long ye've groaned beneath the rigor of the Northmen's sav-  
age laws.

What though brothers league against us? What though  
myriads be the foe?

Victory shall be more honoured by the myriad's overthrow.

Proud Connacians! oft we've wrangled in our pretty feuds of  
yore;

Now we fight against the robber Dane upon our native shore;  
May our hearts unite in friendship as our blood in one red  
tide,

While we crush their mail-clad legions, and annihilate their  
pride!

Brave Eugenians! Erin triumphs in the sight she sees to-  
day—

Desmond's homesteads all deserted for the muster of the fray!  
Cluan's vale and Galtees' summit send their bravest and their  
best;

May such hearts be theirs for ever for the Freedom of the  
West!

Chiefs and Kernes of Dalcassia! Brothers of my past career,  
Oft we've trodden on the pirate flag that flaunts before us  
here;

You remember Inniscattery, how we bounded on the foe,  
As the torrent of the mountain bursts upon the plain below?

They have razed our proudest castles—spoiled the Temples  
of the Lord—

Burnt to dust the sacred relic—put the Peaceful to the  
Sword—

Desecrated all things holy—as they soon may do again,  
If their power to-day we smite not—if to-day we be not men!



On this day the God-man suffered—look upon the sacred  
sign—

May we conquer 'neath this banner as of old did Constantine!  
May the heathen tribe of Odin fade before it like a dream,  
And the triumph of this glorious day in future annals gleam!

God of Heaven bless our banner—nerve our sinews for the  
strife!

Fight we now for all that's holy—for our altars, land and  
life—

For red vengeance on the spoiler, whom the blazing temples  
trace—

For the honor of our maidens and the glory of our race!

Should I fall before the foeman, 'tis the death I seek to-day;  
Should ten thousand daggers pierce me, bear my body not  
away,

Till this day of days is over—till the field is fought and won—  
Then the holy Mass be chanted, and the funeral rites be done.

Men of Erin, men of Erin, grasp the battle-axe and spear!  
Chase these Northern wolves before you like a herd of fright-  
ened deer,

Burst their ranks like bolts from heaven! Down on the hea-  
then crew,

For the glory of the Crucified, and Erin's glory too!

Who can be astonished that, as he ceased, a shout, wild, furious and deafening burst from the Irish lines? A cry arose from the soldiers, we are told, demanding instantly to be led against the enemy. The aged monarch now placed himself at the head of his guards, to lead the van of battle; but at this point his sons and all the attendant princes and commanders protested against his attempting, at his advanced age, to take part personally in the conflict; and eventually, after much effort, they succeeded in persuading him to retire to his tent and to let the chief command devolve upon his oldest son Morrogh.

"The battle," says the historian, "then commenced—'a spirited, fierce, violent, vengeful, and furious battle—the likeness of which was not to be found at that time,' as the old annalists quaintly describe it. It was a conflict of heroes. The chieftains engaged at every point in single combat; and the

greater part of them on both sides fell. The impetuosity of the Irish was irresistible, and their battle-axes did fearful execution, every man of the ten hundred mailed warriors of Norway having been made to bite the dust, and it was against them, we are told, that the Dalcassians had been obliged to contend single-handed. The heroic Morrogh performed prodigies of valor throughout the day. Ranks of men fell before him; and, hewing his way to the Danish standard, he cut down two successive bearers of it with his battle-axe. Two Danish leaders, Carolus and Conmael, enraged at this success, rushed on him together, but both fell in rapid succession by his sword. Twice, Morrogh and some of his chiefs retired to slake their thirst and cool their hands, swollen from the violent use of the sword; and the Danes, observing the vigor with which they returned to the conflict, succeeded, by a desperate effort, in cutting off the brook which had refreshed them. Thus the battle raged from an early hour in the morning—innumerable deeds of valor being performed on both sides, and victory appearing still doubtful, until the third or four hour in the afternoon, when a fresh and desperate effort was made by the Irish, and the Danes, now almost destitute of leaders, began to waver and give way at every point. Just at this moment the Norwegian prince, Anrud, encountered Morrogh, who was unable to raise his arms from fatigue, but with the left hand he seized Anrud and hurled him to the earth, and with the other placed the point of his sword on the breast of the prostrate Northman, and, leaning on it, plunged it through his body. While stooping, however, for this purpose, Anrud contrived to inflict on him a mortal wound with a dagger, and Morrogh fell in the arms of victory. According to other accounts, Morrogh was in the act of stooping to relieve an enemy when he received from him his death wound. This disaster did not have the effect of turning the fortune of the day, for the Danes and their allies were in a state of utter disorder, and along their whole line had commenced to fly towards the city or to their ships. They plunged into the Tolka at a time, we may conclude, when the river was swollen with the tide, so that great numbers were drowned. The body of young Turlough was found after the battle 'at the weir of Clontarf,' with his hands entangled in the hair of a Dane whom he had grappled with in the pursuit.

"But the chief tragedy of the day remains to be related. Brodar, the pirate admiral, who commanded in the point of



DEATH OF KING BRIAN BORU,  
Good Friday, 1014.



the Danish lines remotest from the city, seeing the rout general, was making his way through some thickets with only a few attendants, when he came upon the tent of Brian Borumha, left at that moment without his guards. The fierce Norseman rushed in and found the aged monarch at prayer before the crucifix, which he had that morning held up to the view of his troops, and attended only by his page. Yet, Brian had time to seize his arms, and died sword in hand. The Irish accounts say that the king killed Brodar, and was only overcome by numbers; but the Danish version in the Niala Saga is more probable, and in this Brodar is represented as holding up his reeking sword, and crying: 'Let it be proclaimed from man to man that Brian has been slain by Brodar.' It is added, on the same authority, that the ferocious pirate was then hemmed in by Brian's returned guards and captured alive, and that he was hung from a tree, and continued to rage like a beast of prey until all his entrails were torn out—the Irish soldiers thus taking savage vengeance for the death of their king, who but for their own neglect would have been safe."

Such was the victory of Clontarf—one of the most glorious events in the annals of Ireland. It was the final effort of the Danish power to effect the conquest of this country. Never again was that effort renewed. For a century subsequently the Danes continued to hold some maritime cities in Ireland; but never more did they dream of conquest. That design was overthrown forever on the bloody plain of Clontarf.

It was, as the historian called it truly, "a conflict of heroes." There was no flinching on either side, and on each side fell nearly every commander of note who had entered the battle. The list of the dead is a roll of nobility, Danish and Irish; amongst the dead being the brave Caledonian chiefs, the great Stewards of Mar and Lennox, who had come from distant Alba to fight on the Irish side that day.

But direst disaster of all—most woful in its ulterior results affecting the fate and fortunes of Ireland—was the slaughter of the reigning family: Brian himself, Morrogh, his eldest son and destined successor, and his grandson, "the youthful Torlogh," eldest child of Morrogh—three generations cut down in one day upon the same field of battle.

"The fame of the event went out through all nations. The chronicles of Wales, of Scotland, and of Man; the annals of Ademar and Marianus; the sages of Denmark and the Isles, all record the event. The Norse settlers in Caithness saw



terrific visions of Valhalla 'the day after the battle.' " "The annals state that Brian and Morrogh both lived to receive the last sacraments of the Church, and that their remains were conveyed by the monks to Swords (near Dublin), and thence to Armagh by the Archbishop; and that their obsequies were celebrated for twelve days and nights with great splendor by the clergy of Armagh; after which the body of Brian was deposited in a stone coffin on the north side of the high altar in the cathedral, the body of his son being interred on the south side of the same church. The remains of Torlogh and of several of the chieftains were buried in the old churchyard of Kilmainham, where the shaft of an Irish cross still marks the spot."



Sculpture on a Capital: Priest's House, Glendalough. Beranger, 1779.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers."

## CHAPTER XI

### THE LEINSTER TRIBUTE

BY T. O'NEIL RUSSELL.

Leinster is certainly the most historical of Irish provinces. There are many causes for this. First among them may be the fact of the existence of the Book of Leinster—the greatest repertory of ancient and mediæval history, legend, annals and song possessed in one volume by any nation in Europe, or perhaps in the world. It very naturally treats more fully of things appertaining to Leinster than do any others of our old MS. It was compiled mostly from much older MSS. between the years 1100 and 1160. It is the most important and precious, although not the most ancient, MS. of that once colossal literature of ancient Ireland, of which we now possess only an insignificant remnant. But there were other things besides the Book of Leinster that tended to make Leinster famous and historic. It was the province in which the greater part of the Scandinavian invaders and Anglo-French adventurers landed; it was the last of the Irish provinces that possessed a king—a king who was one *de facto* and *de jure*, namely, Art MacMurrough, who died in the year 1418. But above all that tended to make Leinster historic, it was the province of the Tribute.

It is very curious that so few who read Irish history know so comparatively little about the Leinster Tribute. Almost every one has heard something of Dearvorgil, O'Ruarc's faithless wife, who is generally, but in my opinion erroneously, supposed to have been the cause of the English invasion of Ireland; but not one Irish person in ten has ever heard of Fihir or Dareena, two ladies who, without any guilt on their memories, brought about the most unfortunate and important event in all Irish history—an event that, so far as we can judge, was the prime cause of Ireland's subsequent political misfortunes in general—an event that made probable its conquest by the Danes, and made possible its conquest by the English.

In the first century of the Christian era, Tuathal Teachtmhar was over-King of Ireland. He had two beautiful daughters, Fihir and Dareena were their names—fairer it is said

in the Book of Leinster, "than the clouds of heaven." The king of Leinster married the elder one, Fihir, for it appears to have been the custom in high life in ancient Ireland that the elder sister should be married before the younger ones. The King of Leinster seems to have soon got tired of Fihir, and after some time went to Tara and told Tuatha that Fihir had died, and that he wished to marry her sister, Dareena. She was given to him, and he took her home with him to his *dun* or court in Rath Imel, which was probably near the Glen of Wicklow, now known as the Glen of Imeal. Soon after Dareena was taken home, she met her sister, Fihir, whom she had been told was dead. When Fihir saw her sister her shame was so great that she dropped dead, and when Dareena saw her sister dead, she herself died of grief. When Tuatha heard of the death of both his daughters, he sent word to the King of Ulster, who was foster-father to Dareena, and to the King of Connacht, who was foster-father to Fihir. They marched to the aid of their suzerain, Tuatha, and with an army of 22,000 men, they defeated the forces of the King of Leinster, killed himself, and ravaged the province from Naas to Wexford, and imposed the famous, or rather infamous, tribute on the unfortunate men of Leinster. The tribute was 15,000 cows, 15,000 sheep, 15,000 pigs, 15,000 silver chains, 15,000 mantles, 15,000 copper cauldrons, and one big cauldron, in which twelve pigs could be boiled at once whenever there was a big "blow out" or entertainment at Tara. When we consider the fact that ancient Leinster was not nearly big as the modern province, and was bounded on the north-east by the Liffey at Dublin, and by the Brosna in the north-west, thus lacking half the county Dublin and all Louth, Meath, Westmeath, Longford, and part of the King's County, which belonged to the province of Meath, and that the tribute was intended to be paid every year, we are struck by the great wealth that must have been in Leinster in ancient times. But the tribute was not paid every year, for the gallant Leinster men very seldom paid it until they had to—that is, until they were defeated in battle. It is amusing to read in the Book of Leinster, in the narrative given about the tribute, how such and such over-kings got it, but always observing, as a sort of set-off against the indignity of having to pay it, "They didn't get it without a fight," *Nis fuar gan cath*. The tribute was paid on and off for over five hundred years; it was at length remitted in the seventh century by the over-king Finnachta at

the intercession of St. Moling. It is simply appalling to read about the innumerable battles that for more than five hundred years were fought about the Tribute. Its effect was, very naturally, to denationalize Leinster almost entirely, and make its harried inhabitants join the enemies of their country to find relief from the dreadful bondage in which they were. Although the Tribute had been ostensibly remitted before the Danes invaded Ireland, its memories had not vanished; consequently we find the Leinstermen allies of the Danes very soon after they had established themselves in Ireland; and in later times still, goaded by the memories of the Tribute, and the frequent attempts made by the other provinces to re-impose it, we find Leinstermen joining with the English as they had previously joined with the Danes, and fighting under the English Strongbow at Wexford as they had fought under the Danish Citric at Clontarf.

Thus it was that the Leinster Tribute brought about the political ruin of Ireland by totally denationalising one of its finest provinces. Much addicted as the ancient Irish were to fighting among themselves, the candid student of Irish history has to admit that, so far as can be gathered from ancient MSS., the Irish lived in comparative peace before the Leinster Tribute came to curse them. It is said in the "*Liabhar na L-Uidhre*," a manuscript of the highest authority, that during the reign of Connair Mor, who lived about a century before the imposition of the Leinster Tribute, there was perfect peace in Ireland, although he reigned over fifty years. There is a very curious poem in the Book of Leinster composed by one Broccan. This poem has not, so far as I know, been translated by any one but myself, and I am afraid I have translated it very imperfectly. It is a poem in praise of Leinster, and was written in the tenth or eleventh century. There are two lines in it about the way Leinster was harried and ravaged about the Tribute, which, for awfulness and terribleness almost to blasphemy, may be said to be without parallel in the literature of the world. The poet, and he seems to have been a Churchman also, says—

It is beyond the testimony of the Creator, it is beyond the  
Word of supplicating Christ,  
All the kings of the Irish that make attacks on Leinstermen!

'Almost every imaginable horror of war that cursed Ire-



land for over five hundred years may be traced to this abominable Tribute. One horror connected with it is so awful and so unique in Irish history that it has to be mentioned. This is the killing of the women at Tara when Cormac Mac Art was chief king, in the year 248 of era. There appears to have been at that time some political or druidic festival at Tara, and, as was always the case in ancient Ireland, wherever there was a great gathering of men there was sure to be a great gathering of women, for women seem to have occupied a high position in ancient Ireland. What the nature of the gathering was I have not been able to find out, but there were thirty royal maidens at it, each one having a hundred female attendants, making in all 3,030 women. Dulaing, the King of Leinster at the time, by some means of which we are not informed, got to Tara with a body of armed men, burned every building in it, and killed the whole of the 3,030 women. This fact is so often mentioned, not only in so many of the manuscripts, but in the Book of Leinster itself, that there cannot be any doubt as to its authenticity. The Leinster men had evidently become maddened to desperation by the Tribute, and were hardly accountable for what they did, but it is easy to see that although having been caused by the odious Tribute, the act was looked on, even by Leinstermen, as a horrible atrocity. Cormac hanged ten of the most prominent of the Leinster chiefs on account of it, and doubled the Tribute the unfortunate province had to pay. It is not told to what parts of Ireland the murdered ladies belonged, but we may be sure there were no Leinster girls among them.

In a century or a century and a half after the murder of the women at Tara, the Leinstermen seem to have become absolutely desperate, and to have been seized with a war mania which not even the united forces of the over-King and the Kings of the other provinces seem to have been able to resist. The Leinstermen evidently came to the conclusion that it was better to die fighting than to starve and pay the Tribute; so they fought rather than pay it; and under two of their Kings, Enna Ginselach and Brasal Beallach, they seem to have licked all Ireland, over-Kings and provincial Kings, north, south, and west. But as one cannot fight four, so in the long run the Leinstermen had to bow their necks and pay the Tribute when they were unable to fight and be victorious.

The most complete and perfect history of the Leinster Tribute we have is in the Book of Leinster. It is a long tract,



and takes up twenty-nine columns of that manuscript. It has been recently translated by Mr. Whitley Stokes in the *Revue Celtique* for 1892, and by Mr. S. H. O'Grady in *Silva Gadileca*. The translation by Mr. Stokes is considered to be by far the better one of the two; but both translations are most imperfect, as the poetic or rhymed parts of the tract are not translated at all. The excuse made by Mr. Stokes for not having translated them is that they are, for the most part, repetitions of the prose. This is in a measure true; but there are a great many things said in the poetry that are entirely omitted in the prose. There are no less than twenty short pieces of poetry in this tract, altogether over 600 lines, hardly a line of which has been yet translated and printed. It has to be admitted that the poetic or rhymed parts of this wondrous tale of the "Boramba," or Tribute, are much more difficult to translate than the prose parts, and they are, it would appear, written in more ancient language; but there surely can be nothing in them that such a master of ancient Gaelic as Mr. Stokes could not interpret; and, besides, the poetry contains passages of great beauty and pathos. There is probably nothing in the whole mass of ancient literature, not excepting even that of ancient Greece and Rome, which for pathos, dramatic power, originality, and versatility can surpass this unique remnant of ancient Irish literature, which, through the combined influence of carelessness, prejudice, and death-like apathy on the part of the Irish people, had remained unknown and unheeded for centuries, and was translated and published only a few years ago. Had such a gem of history and song existed in any European language save Gaelic, every cultured man in Christendom would have been acquainted with it centuries ago.

There are two instances of self-sacrifice mentioned in this wondrous tract relating to the Borahma or Tribute, which deserve especial notice. Mr. O'Grady, in his translation of it, passes them over in silence, but Mr. Stokes draws especial attention to them. The incidents are as follows:

A head-King or Emperor of Ireland, who reigned in the sixth century of our era, was named Hugh. His son, Cumasgach, was the heir-apparent. He was a bad boy, as will be easily seen. He took it into his head that he would visit the courts or duns of the provincial rulers or Kings and make insulting proposals to their wives. We are not told how he fared until he reached the residence of Bran Dubh, King of Leinster, who lived near Baltinglass, in the present county

of Wicklow. Bran had heard of Cumasgach's intentions, and was determined "to fix" him. He dressed himself in the garments of a slave, and ordered his people to tell Cumasgach that he had gone over the sea to Britain to collect his Tribute there. Mrs. Bran Dubh took Cumasgach out to the cook-house, which evidently was a large wooden building detached from the dwelling house, and showed him and his attendants the great joint of meat that was being prepared for them. At a signal given by Mrs. Bran Dubh, who, in the meantime, had slipped out of the building, a trap door fell, and none were inside but Cumasgach and one of his attendants named Glasdaimh. Then the house was set on fire. "Who is burning the house on me?" cried Cumasgach. "'Tis I," cried Bran Dubh, making himself known. "Bran Dubh," cried Glasdaimh, "you know me; I have eaten your food; would you play treachery on me?" "No," said Bran Dubh, and he told Glasdaimh how he could escape from the burning house. "Do you hear that?" said Glasdaimh to Cumasgach. "Here, put my clothes on you; they will not know you in them, and will think it is I who am escaping." So the poor attendant, Glasdaimh, was burned, and Cumasgach, his master, escaped, but only to be killed in a few hours by one of Bran Dubh's retainers, to whom he made himself known. When the chief-King, Hugh, heard of the killing of his son, he invaded Leinster with an immense army, and then occurred the battle of Dunbolg, on the borders of Wicklow and Kildare, one of the most extraordinary ever fought. Bran Dubh could not get together enough men to oppose the forces of the Ard-Righ, or chief-King. He was, however, equal to the occasion. He got 3,000 oxen, put two hanging panniers on each of them, put a warrior armed with a short sword and, of course, a shield, into each basket; put bacon, meal, or some other sort of provisions, on top of the panniers or hampers, so that it would be thought there was nothing in them but provisions. The 3,000 oxen were driven into the camp of the imperial forces in the middle of the night; when challenged by the men on watch, their drivers said they were the provision carriers of the army of the chief-King. The loaded oxen were admitted to the camp; the hidden warriors jumped out, and one of the most awful battles recorded in Irish history commenced.

The forces of the chief-King, in spite of their much greater numbers, were cut to pieces, and the chief-King himself slain. The Leinstermen paid no Tribute that year.

The other incident of self-sacrifice recorded in this tract is of a King of Cornacht named Ailill. He made an unjust war against another province and was defeated in battle. When fleeing from the field he ordered his charioteer to look back and tell him if his people were being slaughtered. "The slaughter of your people is intolerable," replied the charioteer. "Turn the chariot," said Ailill; "face my enemies; when they kill me they will be satisfied and will cease slaughtering my people." The charioteer did as he was directed; Ailill was killed; the slaughter of his people ceased; but we are not told what became of the charioteer.

The intense hatred between Leinster and Meath (the province under the direct authority of the chief King) engendered by this horrible Tribute, is almost inconceivable. That hatred remained in all its intensity for over a thousand years. The introduction of Christianity seems to have been utterly powerless to stop it, for Leoghaire MacNeill, the chief King contemporary with St. Patrick, and who was converted to Christianity, was one of the most terrible foes ever the Leinstermen had. They often thrashed him about the Tribute, and had even taken him prisoner, and spared his life; but even in death he was their enemy, for we are told in the *Leabhar nah-Uidhre* that when he was "killed by the elements his body was interred with his warrior weapons in the south-east rampart of the Royal Rath of Leoghaine at Tara; and his face was turned south against the Leinstermen as if fighting with them, for he had been their enemy when he was alive."

One of the first, if not the very first, converts that St. Patrick made in Ireland, was a man named Dubhthach. He seems to have been a good Christian, but it is probable that he was a better Leinsterman than a Christian, for he has left us a poem in praise of his native province, which for intense nationality, laudation of Leinster, contempt for the other provinces, and power of language cannot be equalled by anything in the whole immense mass of ancient Irish literature. The poem and translation may be seen in O'Curry's "MS. Materials of Irish History." Dubhthach says that, "except the Hosts of Heaven round the Creator, there was never a host like the Leinstermen round Criomhthan," and that the war-cry of the Leinstermen should ever be "Moradh Laighen, milleadh Midhe"—"the magnification of Leinster, the destruction of Meath," for Meath, together with the whole North of Ireland, represented the chief King to whom the Leinster

Tribute was to be paid. It is very curious that even to the present day whenever there are wrestling matches in the Phoenix Park, Dublin and Kildare are always pitted against Meath, showing that the remembrance of the Tribute has not even yet been vanished.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Tribute had been remitted by the over-King, Fionnachta, in the seventh century, attempts were made to reimpose it on the unfortunate prince afterwards. It is popularly believed that the banishment of Dermot MacMurrough and the consequent invasion of Ireland by the Anglo-French was brought about by his *liason* with the wife of O'Ruarc. I take a different view of the matter. It was not until thirteen years after the affair with O'Ruarc's wife that Dermot was banished. The facts seem to be that the other provinces thought it was time to re-impose the Tribute on Leinster, and they wanted to get rid of Dermot, who was a very war-like man, and who would fight to the bitter end in defense of his kingdom. The military power of the Danes in Ireland seems to have been almost entirely broken at Clontarf, and after it they gave the Irish very little trouble, and were unable to help their allies, the Leinstermen. If we read carefully between the lines of history we cannot fail to see that the banishment of Dermot MacMurrough arose from no sentimental feeling about his having broken the sanctity of marriage, but from the sordid one of getting him out of the way in order that the hateful Tribute might be more easily re-imposed on the unfortunate province of Leinster. Many attempts had been made to re-impose it after Fionnachta remitted it in the seventh century. The learned and pious Cormac M'Cullinan, King of Munster and Archbishop of Cashel, seems to have had no object in going to war with Leinster in the tenth century but to make that province pay him his share of the Tribute. It is hinted in Irish annals that he was forced against his will, by some influential man of his own province, into war with Leinster. His army was defeated and he himself killed at the terrible battle of Ballach Moon, in the present county of Carlow in the year 903.

It is to be hoped that people will not become disgusted with Irish history, and think it contains nothing but a catalogue of battles and murders. They should remember that the ancient history of all countries is, for the most part, a record of battles. They should remember that Greece was for a thousand years as much of an internecine battle-ground as ever Ireland



was; but the strife of Greeks among themselves did not prevent them from creating works of art or from producing a literature that shall serve as models of perfection to the end of time. Ireland, too, in spite of her internal commotions and unspeakable political misfortunes of almost every kind, created a literature that must, if we can judge by the remnant that is left of it, have been of colossal magnitude. But ancient Ireland has left us something which ancient Greece, with all her transcendent genius, has failed to bequeath us—something more enduring than the mightiest works of architecture, or the most perfect specimens of sculpture; for the music of ancient Ireland shall, by its incomparable pathos, melt the hearts of multitudes in the far distant future, when the choicest models of Grecian art shall have ceased to exist, and when even the Acropolis and the Parthenon shall have crumbled into dust.



Ornament on leather case of Book of Armagh.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers."





## CHAPTER XII.

ST. PATRICK'S BURIAL PLACE—BY VERY REV. SYLVESTER MALONE.

M. R. I. A.

The burial-place of our national saint, like other incidents connected with him, has been matter of doubt and discussion. The doubt arises from the contradictory notices in the Book of Armagh. These notices appear in one place to favor the claim of Downpatrick to the burial-place; in a second place, the claim of Saul quite convenient to it; and in a third place, the claim of Armagh. The value of each of these notices is not the same, but depends on the intrinsic evidence of the statement, as well as on the bias and intelligence of the writer, and on the age to which he belonged.

The claim of Armagh is very slender, and rests merely on the possession of some relics of St. Patrick of some kind, coupled with the supposition of only one Patrick having been in the early Irish Church; but the existence of two Patricks and their respective identities have been established by a writer in the Irish Ecclesiastical Record. I am not in accord with those who deny the existence of bodily relics of St. Patrick in Armagh during the ninth century. It was natural and usual to desire the possession of some relic of a saint less renowned than St. Patrick; and that Armagh procured some bodily relic of him is clearly evidenced in a passage in the Book of Armagh. This passage, which must have escaped the notice of the advocates for Armagh, taken by itself would seem to favor their pretensions.

The biographers of our national saint have surrounded his death and burial with childish miracles. A comparison instituted by them between him and Moses, however edifying it may be, has led to error on several incidents in his life and the circumstances of his burial. The advocates for Downpatrick have so rested the story of his death and burial on a supernatural basis, as scarcely to leave a human fringe for historical criticism. Nevertheless, the proofs adduced by them appear to me quite questionable, while I judge those in favor of Saul to be highly probable.

I now give a description of St. Patrick's burial-place from the oldest, most impartial, and consistent account in the *Book*

of *Armagh*. Tirechan, in a lengthened summary of the saint's life, taken from the oral and written account of Bishop Ultan, who lived in the middle of the seventh century, states that St. Patrick was like to Moses in four things, and the fourth thing was, "no person knew where are his bones." The writer then continues to state that two hosts contended for his body during twelve days without night; and on the twelfth day, as the contending parties were going to give battle, each party saw with themselves the body on a bier, and in consequence refrained from fighting.

Then, as if to justify a departure, by the discovery of Columkille from the likeness to Moses, the writer continues thus in reference to the burial and the prophetic gift of Columkille:

"Columkille, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, pointed out the burial-place of St. Patrick, makes out for certain where it is, that is, in Sabul-Patrick, that is in the church, as a sprout from the waves, beside the sea, where is the bringing together of relics, that is of the bones of Columkille from Britain, and the bringing together of all the saints of Ireland on the day of judgment."

Now, nothing can be clearer than this valuable statement. The burial-place is stated to have been at the Sabul or Barn of Patrick; there was only one such place, and that within two miles of Down. The passage just quoted calls for a few remarks. First of all, the absence of darkness during the twelve days of waking is only a natural explanation of the effect of the lights over the corpse; and though there may have been a desire on the part of some people from *Armagh* to have the burial take place with themselves, we need not suppose there was a disposition to come to blows; a little exaggeration in the description is only very natural. The saint's wish was a command; and, as stated in the *Book of Armagh*, that wish was carried out by his burial in Sabul or Saul. A holy rivalry for the possession of his body was a mark of religious zeal. Hence in another passage in the *Book of Armagh*, in reference to this subject, the writer states that without divine intervention, "it was impossible to have the peace kept about so illustrious and saintly a corpse." Friendly contention then about the body of our saint was only what decency required.

There is no good reason for doubting that some of the relics of St. Columkille may have been enshrined with those

of St. Patrick, though the principal part of them were not located in Ireland till the end of the ninth century. St. Columkille in full health is said, in the Book of Cuana, to have come to St. Patrick's grave, and to have enshrined some of the relics buried with him; and it is not unnatural to suppose that when dying he or his followers after his death wished to have some of his own relics rest with our national apostle.

The allusion to the gathering together of all the Irish saints at Saul is grounded on a petition found in his confession, to the effect that he should lose none of the Irish given him by God, "left to him the judgment of the Irish on the day of doom." This tradition took another form, according to Tirechan: it was one of the three petitions which he made when dying, namely, "that each of us repenting, even in the hour of death, would be saved on the day of judgment and escape hell." The church beside which our saint was buried—the sabul of Patrick—stood, as a sprout from the wave, near the sea. The tidal waves flowing through the inlet of Stangford Lough flooded the low-lying grounds, even under the very shadow of Saul. Even down to the present century, the low ground was occupied by a standing lake, a mile in circumference, and is still called the salt marsh; but, in early times, before a rampart was thrown up to dam the waters, the Sabul Church, peering above the wavelets, appeared to spring from the very waters. Now, what is the reply usually given to this clear and natural statement, that he was buried in Saul? This only—that Saul meant Downpatrick! Such a reply scarcely deserves notice. We have another proof that St. Patrick was buried in Saul: it is found in the Fourth Life as given by Colgan. Saul is incidentally mentioned in connection with a plaything that accidentally fell into St. Patrick's grave there. The incident is alluded to as follows:

"A boy playing about the church of Saul let his hoop drop into a chink in St. Patrick's grave, and having put down his hand to take it up could not withdraw the hand. Consequently, Bishop Loarn, of Bright, a place near at hand, was sent for, and on his arrival, addressed the saint thus: 'Why, O Elder, dost thou hold the hand of the child?'"

Here we have a statement incidentally made in reference to one of the incidents that filled up the life of our saint. It is made without a design of propping up a political or religious system. It was made at a time when Saul was comparatively insignificant, and when Downpatrick, owing to its situa-

tion, as a great emporium, had arisen to importance, and was the seat of the chief of Ulidia.

Let us examine what is said in reply to this proof. The reply is that St. Patrick did not hold the hand of the boy at all; that the phrase *tenentem manum* seems a translation of Irish in the Tripartite, *gabail lama* "expelling"; that our saint only drove away the boy who gave annoyance, and that Bishop Loarn, who probably outlived our saint, was one of his religious family. The interpretation thus quoted is given on the authority of Dr. Stokes; but, with great respect for his accurate knowledge of Irish, he is not to be implicitly followed, as has been proved elsewhere. But before dealing with this, his opinion, I have to observe that the Book of Armagh makes mention of a Loarn settled in Connaught, there is no warrant for stating that there was a Bishop Loarn in Down, during the saint's lifetime; nor is there the least warrant for stating that he died before our saint. There is no valid reason, then, producible for denying the certain statement of the biographer—that St. Patrick was dead in his grave when Bishop Loarn was sent for.

I now deal with the objection founded on the opinion of Dr. Stokes; namely, that *tenentem manum* was a mistranslation of *gabail lama* "expelling," and that consequently St. Patrick was not dead, nor his grave made on the occasion referred to, but "drove away" the playing boy perhaps with too much harshness; in confirmation of this latter view, the Tripartite is appealed to as an authority for stating that St. Patrick was not "always meek and patient," and hence the rebuke of Bishop Loarn for probably too much harshness.

Well, an explanation that involves a censure on our national saint for harshness towards an unthinking boy at play is very suspicious. Besides, even if the boy were annoying the saint, as alleged, and if the saint exceeded the limits of moderation in correction, was it a case for having a bishop sent for, and having him rebuke his superior? Moreover, when the bishop came on the scene our saint's action was continued; and if *tenentem manum* meant expelling, the boy must have been persistently bold during the time the bishop was being sent for, and was coming to the church; and this fact should render impossible the charge of harshness for driving away the boy.

Again, if *tenentem manum* in the Latin Life be, as stated, a mistranslation of *Gabail lama* in the Tripartite, and as Dr.



Stokes has stated that the Irish Life was written in the eleventh century, while the Latin was written in the ninth century, how could the latter be a mistranslation of the former?

In good truth, the writer of the Latin Life knew the meaning of *tenentem manum*, and if he wished to express the idea of expulsion, he had only to use the proper and natural Latin "espello." On the other hand, if the writer of the Tripartite intended to express the same idea, he would have used as on all other occasions he did use, the word *indarb*.

The Irish, as well as the Latin phrase meant literally "seizing the hand," and figuratively "overpowering" or "thwarting." But I am told that other instances in the Tripartite countenance "expelling" as the meaning of the phrase. Well, all the instances which occur to me I will submit to a test. In looking into page 118 (Roll's Tripartite), I find the phrase *gebthar do lam*, "thy hand shall be seized." This was a reply from the angel to St. Patrick, who refused to budge until he obtained the privilege of rescuing as many souls from hell as hairs on his chasuble. The reply meant, "you shall be overpowered," and nothing more. The editor of the Tripartite inferred from the remark of St. Patrick about budging, that the reply had an antithetical meaning, but the inference was not correct. I alight on another instance on page 116. St. Patrick wished to establish a house in Assaroe, but was opposed by Coirbre, "who sent two of his people to 'prevent him,' " *gabail lama*

But a more crucial instance of the phrase occurs in page 156 of the Roll's *Tripartite*. Our saint wished to establish a house in Inishowen; but Coelbad "prevented him in regard to it," *gabail a laim ass*, which the editor renders by expelling "thence." Now the addition of the word *ass* here, and not in the other instances, is translated by "thence." But surely we understand that when there is a question of a person being in a place, and of his expulsion, the expulsion is from that place. The addition of the word *ass*, then, is unnecessary on the supposition that the phrase *gabail lama* in the other instances without it meant "expelling." I shall not dwell on another instance, in page 164, which has the same meaning; and in these instances the word *ass* means not "thence" but "in regard to."

That such is the meaning of *ass*, is very clearly brought out in page 163. It is there stated that our saint wished to take a place in Cell Glass, and (*dlmotha do ass*) "he was re-

fused," according to Roll's editor, but properly and literally "it was refused to him in regard to it." The editor having no meaning for *ass* but "thence," and seeing such a translation to be unmeaning, he did not translate it at all. The Irish word *ass* lends itself to various idiomatic phrases with which the learned editor is apparently not familiar. I hope now it may be admitted that the allusion to the detention of the boy's hand in St. Patrick's grave was not a mis-translation of the Irish, and that it establishes a belief in the writer of *Vita Quarta* as to the burial-place of St. Patrick in Saul. Notwithstanding the political and social greatness to which Downpatrick had risen, and the comparative obscurity of Saul, there is evidence of its claim to St. Patrick's burial-place being recognized in succeeding ages. Thus, the Four Masters, under the year 1293, state that the relics of St. Bridget and Columkille were discovered with the remains of St. Patrick at Patrick's Saul. The discovery, witnessed by the Archbishop of Armagh, was accompanied by miraculous manifestations. The same statement is made in the *Annals of Ulster*. The fact remains, that at the end of the thirteenth century, we find solemn testimony, confirmatory of the statement made in the *Book of Armagh*, in the seventh century, in favor of Saul being the burial place of St. Patrick.

Now, in reply to the several clear and natural statements made without the aid of supernatural agency, in favor of Saul, what are we told? This, that Saul meant Downpatrick, and that *tenentem manum* did not mean "holding the hand." And the proof in favor of the rival burial-place, of what is it composed? Merely of mystery, visions, and miracles! That one angel was commissioned by another to send St. Patrick to him; and the saint, having gone, was told by the angel from a flaming bush—(a) that his death would be in Saul; but, as a compensation to Armagh, that it should have primacy; (b) that there was to be no darkness for twelve days, or rather partial day for the rest of the year; that angels waked St. Patrick with vigil and psalmody during the first night, whilst all who came to the wake slept; that oxen, yoked to the bier, were to be left to themselves to carry the corpse to the destined burial-place; (c) that the rival provinces of Down and Armagh were kept from deadly fight by the swelling tide, which became instinct with life; that on the ebb of the tide the people of Armagh, fording the river, fancied they saw the bier carried on toward Armagh, till it disappeared at Cab-

cenne stream; that the corpse was to be buried, by angelic directions, seven feet deep in the earth; that the relics should not be removed from the earth, but a church built over them; (d) and yet, that no person knew where was the burial-place. All this supplies material for the argument in favor of Downpatrick!

But I would offer a few hurried remarks—(a) We are told in one place that St. Patrick went to the angel, but quite the contrary in the next page. (b) The primacy is said to have been given then to Armagh; but it had been given, on as good authority, long before then to Armagh. (c) The angel directed—a very practical direction—that a church should be built where the oxen were to stop, over the corpse. What if they had not stirred from Saul, where there was a church, or moved to a place where there was already a church? (d) It is strange that, as the Armagh people acknowledged the finger of God on the disappearance of the phantom bier, they paid no heed to the angel's directions, and were determined to give battle or have the corpse. (e) It is equally strange that a church directed by angels to be built, was undertaken only at the end of the seventh century. The narrator states that when a foundation for the church was being dug, quite recently (*novissimis temporibus*), flames issued from the grave. Does not this prove that the burial-place was known, notwithstanding the similarity to Moses? Besides, the angel, in directing the building of a church, and directing that the delvers should sink the grave seven feet deep, must not have intended that the burial-place should be unknown. I may be told that a mistake in regard to Saul should rather be admitted than a whole cycle of miracles in the defence of falsehood. Well, however unpleasant the fact, it must be admitted that unenlightened zeal or dishonest bias can sport with miracles for its own ends, and the Book of Armagh affords ample proof of it in another passage.

The Book of the Angels tells its readers that an angel, having tapped St. Patrick out of slumber, snatched from his long vigils, announced that God "gave him and to the diocese of Armagh all Ireland." The saint then is represented as deprecating such a large and unnecessary gift, because of receiving already a peculiar rent, given freely, though a debt ordained by God, from every free church, and as having no doubt that this debt would be decreed for the future bishops of Armagh by all cenobitical monasteries. What a caricature

and profane libel this on the saint's disinterestedness! The writer ought to have remembered the *confession*:

"They have given me small voluntary gifts, and some of their ornaments upon the altar; but I returned these to them, though they were displeased with me for doing so. But . . . I wished to keep myself prudently in everything . . . so that unbelievers may not, in my ministry, in the smallest point, have occasion to defame it.

"But, perhaps, since I have baptized so many thousands, I may have accepted half a *screapall*. Tell it to me, and I will restore it. When the Lord ordained everywhere clergy, through my humble ministry, then if I asked the price of my shoe, tell it against me, and I will restore you more. I spent for you, that they may receive me."

In order to prop up the claims of Downpatrick, angels must commune with each other; man had to abdicate his senses; the brute beasts are brought on the scene to act their part; and the waters became instinct with life "in digging deep valleys, while, at the same time, piercing the air" as a barrier against contending provinces. Heaven and earth are moved, with their inhabitants, in order to neutralize an historical and the earliest statement in favor of Saul. This simple and natural statement, in striking contrast to its contradictory, tells us that our saint, overtaken by the sickness of death at Saul, was there buried. Saul was his first love, the scene of his first missionary success, and the closing scene of his divinely-favored apostolate. The alleged signs and wonders in connection with the burial resemble others on which, before the present, I had to observe that their extravagance appeared in proportion to the evidence of the falsehood in support of which they appeared to be manufactured. Downpatrick possessed nothing in fact, in association, in prophecy, not even a church, suggestive of a burial-place. Neither the glory of God, so far as it is allowed us to raise a corner of the mysterious veil, nor edification of man called for Divine interposition on the occasion. As to the dying wish of the saint, it certainly did not lean to Downpatrick, nor probably, notwithstanding the repeated and accentuated assurances to the contrary in the *Book of Armagh*, to Armagh; for his wish on such a matter would be an absolute command; and as to a chosen spot, "all Ireland was given to him as his diocese."

It was only natural, then, in the circumstances that the great high priest, the glorious national apostle, would lie



where he fell; and, if it were not natural, it would be a matter of indifference to him who, in his extreme old age, had to say:

"I daily expect murder, or to be circumvented, or reduced to slavery, or to a mishap of some kind. . . . And if ever I have imitated anything good on account of my God, Whom I love, I pray Him to grant me that, with those proselytes and captives, I may pour out my blood for His name's sake, even though I may be deprived of burial, and my corpse most miserably be torn limb from limb by dogs or wild beasts, or birds of the air should devour it."

In conclusion: the alleged angelic direction in regard to the burial of St. Patrick in Down, and to the church to be built over him, is still further proved to be false by the fact that law and custom forbade any person in the fifth century to be buried in a church, or a church to be built over him, unless he was a **martyr**.



Ornament on top of Devenish Round Tower  
From Petrie's "Round Towers," 400.





SECTION II.

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# THE NORMAN INVASION

BY

MARTIN HAVERTY, Author of a "History of Ireland"

CONTAINING

DERMOT McMORROUGH'S PERFIDY—ABDUCTION AND FATE OF THE  
WIFE OF THE PRINCE OF BREFNI—STRONGBOW'S ARRIVAL  
IN IRELAND—ALLEGED BULL OF POPE ADRIAN—  
LANDING OF HENRY II.



# THE NORMAN INVASION.

BY MARTIN HAVERTY.

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## CHAPTER I.

### CAUSES THAT LED TO THE INVASION—DERMOT MAC MURROUGH'S PERFIDY.

Dermot MacMurrough, or Diarmaid-na-Gall, that is, Dermot of the foreigners, as he is often called, the infamous king of Leinster who betrayed his country to the English, now appears on the scene, and, from the commencement, his ill-omened career is marked by crime. In the year 1135, according to Mageoghegan's *Annals of Clonmacnoise*, he took the abbess of Kildare from her cloister and compelled her to marry one of his men, at the same time killing 170 of the people of Kildare who attempted to prevent the sacrilegious outrage. After being involved in various feuds in the interval, he endeavored, in 1141, to crush all resistance to his tyranny by a barbarous onslaught upon the nobles of his province. He killed Donnell, lord of Hy-Faelain, and Murrough O'Tuat-hail; put out the eyes of Munkertach MacGillamochalmog, lord of Feara Cualann, or Wicklow, and killed or blinded seventeen other chieftains, besides many of inferior rank.

In the year 1152 Meath was dismembered by the monarch, O'Loughlin, aided by Turlough O'Conor, Dermot MacMurrough, and other princes. From Clonard westward was given to Murrough O'Melaghlin, who had been formerly deposed, and from the same point eastward, to Murrough's son Melaghlin. Tiernan O'Rourke, lord of Breffny, was also dispossessed of his territory by this host of confederated princes; and at the same time another mortal injury was inflicted on him; his wife, Dervorgil, being carried off by MacMurrough, the king of Leinster.

The time and other circumstances of this abduction have been strangely distorted by historians to give a coloring of romance to the account of the English invasion, with which it cannot have had the least connection. It occurred, according to our authentic annals, in 1152, and Dermot's flight to

England, and invitation to the invaders, did not take place till 1166. Dervorgil was at the former of these dates forty-four years of age, and her paramour sixty-two. She was shamefully encouraged by her brother, Melaghlin O'Melaghlin, just then made lord of East Meath, to abandon her husband, who appears to have treated her harshly before that, and to have deserved little sympathy as a hero of romance. On leaving O'Rourke, she took with her the cattle and articles which formed her dowry, and the following year, when she was rescued from MacMurrough by Turlough O'Conor, and restored to her family, the same cattle and other property were also restored. It is probable that she did not reside again with her husband, but retired immediately to Mellifont, where she endeavored by charity and rigid penance during the remainder of her life, to expiate her misconduct. Meditating vengeance against the country from which he was compelled to fly in disgrace, the fugitive king of Leinster arrived at Bristol, where he learned that Henry II., to whom he had determined to apply for aid, was absent in Aquitaine. Thither he immediately proceeded; and having at length found the English king, he laid before him such a statement of his grievances as he thought fit. He offered to become Henry's vassal, should he, through his assistance, be reinstated in his kingdom, and made the most abject protestations of reverence and submission. Henry lent a willing ear to his statement, and must have been forcibly struck by this invitation to carry out a project which he himself had long entertained, and for which he had been long making grave preparations many years before. That project was the invasion of Ireland. As his hands were, however, just then full of business—for he was engaged in bringing into submission the proud nobles of the province in which he then was, while at home the resistance of St Thomas a Becket, who would not suffer him to trample on the rights of the church with impunity, was become daily more irksome—he could not occupy himself personally in Dermot's affairs, but gave him letters addressed to all his subjects—English, French, and Welsh—recommending Dermot to them, and granting them a general license to aid that prince in the recovery of his territory by force of arms.

With this authorization Dermot hastened back to Wales, where he gave it due publicity, but for some time his efforts to induce anyone to espouse his cause were unavailing. At length, he was fortunate enough to find some needy military



adventurers suited to his purpose. The chief of these was Richard de Clare, commonly called Strongbow (as his father, Gilbert, also had been), from his skill with the crossbow. This man, who was earl of Pembroke and Strigul, or Chepstow, being of a brave and enterprising spirit, and of ruined fortune, entered warmly into Dermot's design. He undertook to raise a sufficient force to aid the king of Leinster in the recovery of his kingdom, for which Dermot promised him his daughter, Eva, in marriage, and the succession to the throne of Leinster. Two Anglo-Norman knights, Maurice FitzGerald and Robert FitzStephen, also enlisted themselves in the cause of Dermot. These men were half-brothers, being the sons of Nesta, who had been first the mistress of Henry I., then the wife of Gerald of Windsor, governor of Pembroke and lord of Carew, to whom she bore the former of the adventurers, and finally the mistress of Constable Stephen de Marisco, who was the father of Robert FitzStephen. These knights were men of needy circumstances, and Dermot promised to reward them liberally for their services, by granting them the city of Wexford with certain lands adjoining. Such were the obscure individuals by whom the first introduction of English power into Ireland was planned and carried out.

The year 1168 was now drawing to a close, and Dermot MacMurrough, relying on the promises which he had obtained, ventured back to Ireland, and remained, during the winter, concealed in a monastery of Augustinian canons which he had founded at Ferns. There is some uncertainty as to the date of the first landing of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland; and it may also be doubted, whether some of the proceedings of Dermot and his foreign auxiliaries, mentioned obscurely in the native annals, occurred previous to the arrival of FitzStephen, and the surrender of Wexford, in May, 1169, or were identical with those recorded after that time. Thus it is stated, that early in the year a few of Dermot's Welsh auxiliaries arrived, and that with their aid he recovered possession of Hy-Kinsellagh; but that this movement on his part was premature, and that at the approach of a force, hastily collected by Roderic O'Connor and Tiernan O'Rourke, a battle in which some of the Welsh were killed having been fought at Cill Osnadh, now Kellistown, in the county of Carlow, Dermot, who only wanted to gain time, made a hypocritical peace with the monarch, giving him seven hostages for ten cantreds of his former territory. It is added, that he gave a

hundred ounces of gold to O'Rourke, as an atonement for the injury he had formerly inflicted on him; but all this seems to be only a confused version of some of the events which we are now about to relate in order, on the authority of Giraldus Cambrensis and Maurice Egan.

According to the most probable account of the first Anglo-Norman descent, Robert FitzStephen, with 30 knights all of his own kinsmen, 60 men-at-arms, and 300 skillful archers, disembarked in May, 1169, at Bannow, near Wexford. One of the knights was Hervey de Montemarisco, or Mountmaurice, a paternal uncle of Earl Strongbow; and the next day, at the same place, landed Maurice de Prendergast, a Welsh gentleman, with 10 knights and 60 archers. Dermot, on receiving notice of their arrival, marched with the utmost speed to join them with 500 men, being all that he could muster; and with the joint force, he proceeded immediately to lay siege to the town of Wexford, the inhabitants of which were Dano-Irish. The first assault was repelled with great bravery, the inhabitants having previously set fire to the suburbs, that they might not afford a cover to the enemy; but when the Anglo-Normans were preparing to renew the attack next morning, the townspeople demanded a parley and terms of capitulation were negotiated by the clergy; Dermot, though with great reluctance, consenting to pardon the inhabitants on returning to their allegiance. In the first day's assault eighteen of the English had been slain, and only three of the brave garrison. FitzStephen burned the shipping which lay before the town; and it is said that he destroyed also the vessels which had conveyed his own troops from England, to show that they were resolved never to retreat. The lordship of the town was then, according to the contract, made over to him and to FitzGerald, who had not yet arrived, and two cantreds of land, lying between the towns of Wexford and Waterford, were granted by Dermot to Hervey of Mountmaurice.

Dermot now conducted his allies to Ferns, where they remained inactive for three weeks, without molestation, and indeed without appearing to excite any attention on the part of King Roderic and the other Irish princes. This apathy of the Irish, which appears to us so unaccountable and which was so lamentable in its consequences, partly arose, no doubt, from the insignificance of the invaders, in point of numbers. Never did a national calamity, so mighty and so deplorable,

proceed from a commencement more contemptible than did the English occupation of Ireland. The Irish were accustomed to employ parties of Danish mercenaries in their feuds. They had also mixed themselves up more than once in the quarrels of the Welsh; and they looked upon MacMurrough's handful of Welsh and Normans as casual auxiliaries who came on special duty and would depart when it was performed. The Irish annalists expressly state that the monarch, with a number of subordinate princes and a large army, entered Leinster at this very time, and "went to meet the men of Munster, Leinster, and Ossory," but "set nothing by the Flemings," as the first party of the invaders are called in these records. As to Roderic, he showed no foresight or prudence, no energy of character or real bravery, and no regard for the interests of Ireland as an integral nation, throughout the whole of this most fatal crisis in his country's fortunes. About this time he celebrated the fair of Taltin, when the concourse assembled was so great that the horsemen are said to have been spread over the tract of country from Mullach Aiti, now the hill of Lloyd, west of Kells, to Mullach Taltin, a distance of about six and a half miles; yet, while this display of numbers was made within a couple of days' march, Dermot, with his handful of foreign auxiliaries, was permitted to overrun the province of Leinster, and to brave the anger of the imbecile monarch.

Emboldened by the inactivity of his enemies, Dermot resolved to act on the offensive; and as he had a cause of quarrel with MacGilla Patrick, prince of Ossory, who, actuated by a feeling of jealousy, had put out the eyes of Enna, a son of MacMurrough's, who was in his power as a hostage, he determined to make him the object of his vengeance. Between the forces of his province and the garrison of Wexford. Dermot was enabled to muster 3,000 men, but his principal reliance was on his foreign friends, in whose ranks he chiefly remained; and the Wexford men were so hated and distrusted by him, that they were not allowed to encamp at night with the rest of the army. Thus Dermot marched into Ossory, where the inhabitants made a brave stand; but after a good deal of fighting, having been decoyed from a strong position into one where they were exposed to the Norman cavalry, they were ultimately defeated, and three hundred of their heads were piled up before Dermot as a trophy of victory. This ferocious monster is said to have leaped and clapped his

hands with joy at the sight; and Cambrensis adds that he turned over the heads in the ghastly heap, and that recognizing one of them as the head of a man to whom he had particular aversion, he seized it by both ears, and with brutal frenzy bit off the nose and lips of his dead enemy. Such is the character which we receive of this detestable tyrant, even from contemporary English authorities.

Roderic, awakening at length to a sense of the duty which devolved on him, convened a meeting of the Irish princes at Tara, and, in obedience to the summons, a large army was mustered; while Dermot, who had already carried desolation through a great portion of Ossory, became dismayed at the first symptoms of preparations against him, and, halting with his English friends in their career of havoc, returned to Ferns, and hastily entrenched himself there. Scarcely, however, had the Irish army assembled, when dissension broke out in its ranks, and on marching as far as Dublin, Roderic thought fit to dispense with the services of MacDunlevy of Ulidia, and of O'Carroll of Oriel, who accordingly drew off their respective contingents, and returned home. Still the monarch arrived before Ferns with an army sufficient to annihilate the small force which he found collected there round Dermot; for it must be observed, that on the news of an Irish army being in the field, the king of Leinster was abandoned by a great number of his Irish followers.

The conduct of Roderic on this occasion lamentably illustrates the weakness of his character. Instead of proceeding at once to crush the dangerous foe, or insisting on the unconditional submission of Dermot, he entered into private negotiations, first with FitzStephen, and then with Dermot; endeavoring to induce the former to abandon the king of Leinster, and to return to his own country, or to detach the latter from his foreign allies, and bring them to an humble admission of his allegiance. Such attempts showed the feebleness of his councils, and only excited the contempt of both FitzStephen and Dermot. Roderic's overtures were therefore rejected with disdain, and preparations were made on both sides for battle. We cannot now judge how far the strength of the position occupied by the enemy justified the reluctance of the Irish monarch to attack; but we find him again endeavoring to avert the necessity of fighting by further treating with the perfidious Dermot, so that it was Roderic, and not the besieged, who appeared to supplicate for peace.



At length terms were agreed on, Roderic consenting to give the full sovereignty of Leinster to Dermot and to his heirs, on his own supremacy being acknowledged; and Dermot on the other part, giving his favorite son, Conor, as a hostage to the monarch, and binding himself solemnly by a secret treaty to bring over no more foreign auxiliaries, and to dismiss those now in his service, so soon as circumstances would permit him to do so.

About this time Maurice de Prendergast withdrew from Dermot, with his followers, to the number of 200; and finding that his departure from Ireland was prevented, he offered his services to the king of Ossory. This defection alarmed Dermot, and enabled his enemy, MacGilla Patrick, to make some reprisals; but Maurice soon abandoned the latter also, and returned for a short time to Wales.

Dermot, who only desired to gain time, soon betrayed the insincerity of his concessions to Roderic; for Maurice Fitzgerald having in a few days after arrived with a small party of knights and archers at Wexford, he hastened to meet his ally, regardless of his treaty, and, with this addition to his forces, marched to attack Dublin, which had thrown off its allegiance to him, and was then governed by Hasculf Mac-Turkill, a prince of Danish descent. The territory around the city was soon laid waste in so merciless a way, that the inhabitants were obliged to sue for peace; and the king of Leinster having glutted his revenge, accepted their submission, for the purpose of being free to lend assistance to Donnell O'Brien, prince of Thomond, who had married the daughter of Dermot, and half-sister of Eva, and had just then rebelled against the monarch Roderic. This opportunity of weakening the power of the latter was, to the vindictive king of Leinster, too gratifying to be neglected; and Dermot felt so elated by repeated successes, that he was no longer content with his position as a provincial prince, but set up a claim to the sovereignty of Ireland, which he grounded on the right of an ancestor. In his ambitious aim he was encouraged by his English auxiliaries; and in a consultation with Fitz-Stephen and FitzGerald, it was resolved that a message be sent immediately to Strongbow, pressing him to fulfil his engagements, and to come to their aid with as little delay as possible.

Strongbow on his part felt himself in a difficult position. He could no longer act upon Henry's letters patent, Dermot



being now reinstated in his kingdom, and a new sanction being necessary to authorize a hostile expedition to Ireland, he repaired to Normandy, where the English king then was, to solicit his permission. Henry, who was naturally jealous and suspicious, and entertained a particular aversion to the ambitious earl of Pembroke, in order to rid himself of his opportunity, gave him an equivocal answer, which Strongbow pretended to understand as the required permission. He thereupon returned to Wales, set about collecting men with all possible diligence, and sent Raymond le Gros with ten knights and seventy archers as his advanced guard. This party landed at a small rocky promontory then called Dundolf, or Downdonnell, near Waterford, and being joined by Hervey of Mountmaurice, they constructed a temporary fort, to enable them to retain their position until Strongbow should arrive. The citizens of Waterford, aided by O'Faelain, or O'Phelan, prince of the Deisi, and O'Ryan, of Idrone, sent a hastily collected force to dislodge the invaders; but through the bravery of Raymond, aided by accident, the besieged were not only able to defend themselves, but effectually to rout the undisciplined multitude who came against them, killing, it is said, 500 men, and taking seventy of the principal citizens prisoners. Large sums of money were offered to ransom the latter, but the English, as some say, swayed by the sanguinary counsel of Hervey of Mountmaurice, rejected these offers; and for the purpose of striking terror into the Irish brutally massacred the prisoners by breaking their limbs, and hurling them from the summit of the precipice into the sea. This atrocity was a fitting prelude to the English wars in Ireland; but most historians vindicate Raymond le Gros from the stigma which it cast upon the English arms.

In the meantime Strongbow had assembled his army of adventurers and mercenaries at Milford, and was about to embark, when he received a peremptory order from Henry forbidding the expedition. What was to be done? His hesitation, if any, was very brief, and he adopted the desperate alternative of disobeying his king. He accordingly sailed, and with an army of about 1,200 men, of whom 200 were knights, landed near Waterford on the 23d of August, the eve of St. Bartholomew's day. Here he was immediately joined by his friend Raymond le Gros, who had been three months in Ireland, and the very next day he proceeded to lay siege to Waterford. The citizens displayed great heroism in their





MARRIAGE OF EVA McMURROUGH TO EARL STRONGBOW.

defence, and twice repulsed the attempts of the assailants. At length a large breach was made in the wall by the fall of a house which projected over it, and which came toppling down when the props by which it had been supported were cut by Raymond's knights; and the besiegers pouring into the city made a dreadful slaughter of the inhabitants. A tower in which Reginald, or Gillemaire, as the Irish annalists call him, a lord of Danish extraction, and O'Phelan, prince of the Deisi, continued to defend themselves, was taken; and these two brave men were on the point of being massacred by their pitiless captors, when Dermot MacMurrough arrived, and for the first and only time we see mercy exercised at his request. The carnage of the now unresisting inhabitants was suspended. Dermot expressed great exultation at the arrival of Earl Strongbow, and insisted upon paying him at once his promised guerdon. He had taken his daughter, Eva, with him for that purpose; the marriage ceremony was hastily performed, and the wedding cortege passed through streets reeking with the still warm blood of the brave and unhappy citizens.

Immediately after the marriage of Strongbow and Eva, Dermot and his allies set out on a rapid march to Dublin, leaving a small party to garrison Waterford. Roderic had collected a large army and encamped at Clondalkin, near Dublin; and Hasculf, the governor of that city, encouraged by their presence, revolted against Dermot. Hence the haste of the confederate army to reach Dublin; and as they proceeded along the high ridges of the Wicklow mountains in order to escape the fortified passes by which their march would have been impeded in the valleys, they arrived under the walls of Dublin long before their presence there could be calculated on. This rapid movement, and the now formidable array of the Anglo-Norman army, filled the citizens with consternation, and recourse was had to negotiation; the illustrious archbishop of Dublin, St. Lawrence O'Toole, being commissioned to arrange terms of peace with Dermot. While the parley, however, was still proceeding in Strongbow's camp, two of the English leaders, Raymond le Gros and Milo de Cogan, regardless of the usages of civilized warfare—though some say the time for the conference had expired—led their troops respectively against the weakest or most neglected parts of the fortifications, and obtained an entrance. The inhabitants, relying on the negotiations which were going forward, were





MARRIAGE OF EVA McMURROUGH TO EARL STRONGBOW.



adherents among the people of East Meath, and some of the men of Oriel.

Alarmed at these events, Roderic foolishly imagined that he could arrest the progress of Dermot by threatening him with the death of his hostages. He accordingly sent ambassadors to remonstrate with him for his perfidy in breaking his engagements, and for his unprovoked aggressions, and to announce that if he did not withdraw his army within his own frontier, and dismiss his foreign auxiliaries, the heads of his hostages should be forfeited. Dermot treated this menace with derision. As far as we can judge of his character, he would have preferred the gratification of his revenge to the lives of all his children, had they been at stake. And he sent back word to Roderic that he would not desist until he had fully asserted his claim to the sovereignty of all Ireland, and had dispossessed Roderic of his kingdom of Connaught into the bargain.

There is a difference of opinion as to whether Roderic fulfilled his threat. Cambrensis, a contemporary writer, informs us that he did. Keating says that he would not expose himself to such odium as the execution of the hostages would entail; but the Four Masters, who are a much better authority, and would not have made the statement without sufficient grounds, say that "the three royal hostages" were put to death at Athlone. These were Conor, the son of Dermot; his grandson (the son of Donnell Kavanagh); and the son of his foster brother, O'Caellaighe. The act was cruel, but in it Roderic did not exceed his strict right; and the same year Tiernan O'Rourke put to death the hostages of East Meath, which had rebelled against him.

Giraldus Cambrensis furnishes some interesting particulars of a synod held about the close of this year (1170). It appears from it that there prevailed in England a barbarous custom of selling children as slaves, and that the Irish were the principal purchasers in that abominable market. There are other authorities also to show this nefarious practice was prevalent in England, the twenty-eighth canon of the council of London, held in 1102, having been enacted for its prohibition. The custom of buying English slaves was held by the Irish clergy to be so wicked that, after deliberating on the subject, the synod of Armagh pronounced the invasion of Ireland by Englishmen to be a just judgment upon the country on account of it, and decreed that any of the English who were

held as slaves in Ireland should immediately be set free. It was a curious and characteristic coincidence that an Irish deliberative assembly should by an act of humanity to Englishmen, have met the merciless aggressions which the latter had just then commenced against this country.

In the midst of his ambitious and vindictive projects, Dermot MacMurrough died at Ferns on the 4th of May, 1171. His death, which took place in less than a year after his sacrilegious church-burnings in Meath, is described as accompanied by fearful evidence of divine displeasure. He died intestate, and without the sacraments of the church. His disease was of some unknown and loathsome kind, and was attended with insufferable pain, which, acting on the naturally savage violence of his temper, rendered him so furious that his ordinary attendants were compelled to abandon him; and his body became at once a putrid mass, so that its presence above ground could not be endured. Some historians suggest that this account of his death may have been the invention of enemies; yet it is so consistent with what we know of MacMurrough's character and career, from other sources, as to be no wise incredible. He reached the age of eighty-one years, and is known in Irish history as *Diarmaid-na-Gall*, or Dermot of the Foreigners.

On the death of Dermot, Earl Strongbow, regardless of his duty as an English subject, got himself proclaimed king of Leinster; and as his marriage with Eva could not under the Irish law confer any right of succession, he grounded his claim on the engagement made by the late king, when he first agreed to undertake his cause. As this was the first step in the establishment of English power in Ireland, it is well the reader should bear in mind the way it was effected. There was here no conquest. The only fighting which the invaders yet had was with the Dano-Irish of Wexford, Waterford, and Dublin; and against these, as well as in their predatory excursions, the Anglo-Normans acted in conjunction with their Irish allies in Leinster. They can hardly be said, so far, to have come in collision with an Irish army at all, and most certainly, as Leland observes, "the power of the nation they did not contend with." "The settlement of a Welsh colony in Leinster," as the same historian, notwithstanding his strong anti-Irish prejudice, continues, "was an incident neither interesting nor alarming to any, except, perhaps, a few of most reflection and discernment." Even the Irish annalists speak with a

careless indifference of the event, "but, had these first adventurers conceived that they had nothing more to do but to march through the land and terrify a whole nation of timid savages by the glitter of their armor, they must have speedily experienced the effects of such romantic madness."



Composed from the Book of Kells.



## CHAPTER II.

### ST. LAWRENCE O'TOOLE—BRAVERY OF THE NORTHERN PRINCES— ENGLISH LAW ESTABLISHED IN IRELAND.

Fortune thus seemed in many respects to favor Strongbow and his band of Anglo-Norman and Welsh adventurers, yet their position was one of considerable embarrassment. The king of England was jealous of their success, and indignant at the slight they had put upon his authority. He was also annoyed at finding his own designs against Ireland anticipated by men who were likely to become insolent and troublesome; and he accordingly issued a peremptory mandate, ordering every English subject then in Ireland to return within a certain time, and prohibiting the sending thither of any further aid or supplies. Alarmed at this edict, Strongbow dispatched Raymond le Gros to Henry with a letter couched in the most submissive terms, placing at the king's disposal all the lands which he had acquired in Ireland. Henry was at the moment absorbed in the difficulties in which the murder of St. Thomas a Becket—if not at his command, at least at his implied desire, and by his myrmidons—had involved him, and he neither deigned to notice the earl's letter, nor paid any further attention to the Irish affair for some time, so that Strongbow, still tempting fate, continued his course without regarding the royal edict. To add to his difficulties, his standard was deserted by nearly all his Irish adherents, on the death of Dermot, which took place soon after the date of the royal mandate; and during his absence from Dublin that city was besieged by a Scandinavian force, which was collected by Hasculf, in the Orkneys, and conveyed in sixty ships, under the command of a Dane called John the Furious. Milo de Cogan, whom Strongbow had left as governor, bravely repulsed the besiegers, but was near being cut off outside the eastern gate, until his brother Richard came to his relief with a troop of cavalry, whereupon the Norwegians were defeated with great slaughter, John the Furious being slain, and Hasculf made captive. The latter was at first reserved for ransom, but on threatening his captors with a more desperate attack on a future occasion, they basely put him to death.

The great archbishop of Dublin, St. Laurence O'Toole,



whose illustrious example has consecrated Irish patriotism, perceiving the straits to which the Anglo-Normans were reduced, and judging rightly that it only required an energetic effort, for which a favorable moment had arrived, to rid the country of the dangerous intruders, went among the Irish princes to rouse them to action. For this purpose he proceeded from province to province, addressing the nobles and people in spirit-stirring words, and urging the necessity for an immediate and combined struggle for independence. Emissaries were also sent to Godfred, king of the Isle of Man, and to some of the northern islands, inviting co-operation against the common enemy.

Earl Strongbow, becoming aware of the impending danger, repaired in haste to Dublin and prepared to defend himself; nor was he long there when he saw the city invested on all sides by a numerous army. A fleet of thirty ships from the isles blocked up the harbor, and the besieged were so effectually hemmed in that it was impossible for them to obtain fresh supplies of men or provisions. Roderic O'Connor, who commanded in person, and had his own camp at Castleknock, was supported by Tiernan O'Rourke and Murrrough O'Carroll with their respective forces, and St. Laurence was present in the camp animating the men, or, as some pretend, though very improbably, even bearing arms himself. The Irish chiefs, relying on their numbers, contented themselves with an active blockade, and for a time their tactics promised to be successful, the besieged being reduced to extremities for want of food. Strongbow solicited a parley, and requested that St. Laurence should be the medium of communication. He offered to hold the kingdom of Leinster as the vassal of Roderic; but the Irish monarch rejected such terms indignantly, and required that the invaders should immediately surrender the towns of Dublin, Wexford, and Waterford, and undertake to depart from Ireland on a certain day. It is generally admitted that under the circumstances the propositions of Roderic were merciful, and for awhile it was probable that they would, however unpalatable, be accepted.

At this crisis, Donnell Kavanagh, son of the late king of Leinster, contrived to penetrate in disguise into the city. He brought Strongbow the intelligence that his friend Fitz-Stephen was, together with his family and a few followers, shut up in the Castle of Carrig, near Wexford, where he was closely besieged, and must, unless immediately relieved, fall

into the hands of his exasperated enemies. This sad news drove the garrison of Dublin to desperation; and at the suggestion of Maurice FitzGerald it was determined that they should make a sortie with their whole force, and attempt the daring exploit of cutting their way through the besiegers. To carry out this enterprise, Strongbow disposed his men in the following order: Raymond le Gros, with twenty knights on horseback, led the van; to these succeeded thirty knights under Milo de Cogan; and this body was followed by a third, consisting of about forty knights, commanded by Strongbow himself and FitzGerald; the remainder of their forces, said to consist of only 600 men, bringing up the rear. It was about three in the afternoon when this well-organized body of desperate men sallied forth, and the Irish army, lulled in false security, and expecting a surrender rather than a sortie, was taken wholly by surprise. A great number were slaughtered at the first onset; and the panic which was produced spreading to the besieging army, a general retreat from before the city commenced, so that Roderic, who with many of his men was enjoying a bath in the Liffey, had some difficulty in effecting his escape. The English, on their side, astonished at their own unexpected success, returned to the city laden with spoils, and with an unlimited supply of provisions.

Strongbow once more committed the government of Dublin to Milo de Cogan, and set out with a strong detachment for Wexford to relieve FitzStephen; but after overcoming some difficulty in the territory of Idrone, where his march was opposed by the local chieftain O'Regan, he learned on approaching Wexford that he came too late to assist his friend. Carrig Castle had already fallen, and it is said that the Wexford men were not very scrupulous on the occasion in their treatment of foes who had proved themselves sufficiently capable of treachery and cruelty. The story is, that FitzStephen and his little garrison were deceived by the false intelligence that Dublin had been captured by the Irish army, that the English, including Strongbow, FitzGerald, and Raymond le Gros, had been cut to pieces, and that the only chance of safety was in immediate surrender; the Dano-Irish besiegers undertaking to send FitzStephen with his family and followers unharmed to England. It is added, that the bishops of Wexford and Kildare presented themselves before the castle to confirm this false report by a solemn assurance; but

this circumstance, if not a groundless addition, would only show that a rumour, by which the bishops themselves had been deceived, prevailed about the capture of Dublin, a thing not at all improbable. False news of a similar kind is sometimes circulated in our own times. At all events the stratagem, if it was one, succeeded, and FitzStephen on yielding himself to his enemies was cast into prison, and some of his followers were put to death. Scarcely was this accomplished, when intelligence arrived that Strongbow was approaching, and that the Wexford men, finding themselves unable to cope with him single-handed, and fearing his vengeance, set fire to their town, and sought refuge with their prisoners in the little island of Beg-Érin, whence they sent word to the earl that if he made any attempt to reach them in their retreat they would instantly cut off the heads of FitzStephen and the other English prisoners. Thus foiled in his purpose, Strongbow with a heavy heart directed his course to Waterford, and immediately invaded the territory of Ossory, in conjunction with Donnell O'Brien.

During the earl's absence, Tiernan O'Rourke hastily collected an army of the men of Breffny and Oriel, and made an attack on Dublin, but he was repulsed by Milo, and lost his son under the walls. With this exception, no attempt was made to molest the invaders at a period when they could have been so easily annihilated; and intestine wars were carried on among the northern tribes, and also between Connaught and Thomond, as if there had been no foreign enemy in the country.

Strongbow, on the other side, learnt at Waterford, from emissaries whom he had sent to plead his cause with Henry, that his own presence for that purpose was indispensable, and he accordingly set out in haste for England. He found the English monarch at Newnham in Gloucestershire, making active preparations for an expedition to Ireland. Henry at first refused to admit him to his presence; but at length suffered himself to be influenced by the earl's unconditional submission, and by the mediation of Hervey of Mountmaurice, and consented to accept his homage and oath of fealty, and to confirm him in the possession of his Irish acquisitions, with the exception of Dublin and the other seaport towns and forts, which were to be surrendered to himself. He also restored the earl's English estates, which had been forfeited on his disobedience to the king's mandate; but as it were to mark his

displeasure at the whole proceeding of the invasion of Ireland by his subjects, he seized the castles of the Welsh lords to punish them for allowing the expedition to sail from their coasts contrary to his commands. It is probable that in all this, hypocrisy and tyranny were the king's ruling motives. He hated the Welsh, and took the opportunity to crush them still more, and to garrison their castles with his own men. These events took place not many months after the murder of St. Thomas a Becket, and it is generally admitted that the king's expedition to Ireland, if not projected, was at least hastened, in order to withdraw public attention from that atrocity, and to make a demonstration of his power before the country at a moment when his name was covered with the odium which the crime involved.

Henry II., attended by Strongbow, William FitzAdelm de Burgo, Humphrey de Bohem, Hugh de Lacy, Robert Fitz-Bernard, and other knights and noblemen, embarked at Milford, in Pembrokeshire, with a powerful armament, and landed at a place called by the Anglo-Norman chroniclers Croch—probably the present Crook—near Waterford, on St. Luke's day, October 18th, A. D. 1171. His army consisted, it is said, of 500 knights, and about four thousand men-at-arms; but it was probably much more numerous, as it was transported, according to the English account, in 400 ships.

Henry assumed in Ireland the plausible policy which seemed so natural to him. He pretended to have come rather to protect the people from the aggressions of his own subjects than to acquire any advantage for himself; but at the same time, as a powerful yet friendly sovereign, to receive the homage of vassal princes, and to claim feudal jurisdiction in their country. It is impossible, of course, to reconcile pretenses so inconsistent in themselves; but they served the purpose for which they were invented. He put on an air of extreme affability, accompanied by a great show of dignity, and paraded a brilliant and well disciplined army with all possible pomp and display of power.

The Irish, on the other hand, seemed at a loss what to think or how to act. An event had occurred for which they were not prepared by any parallel case in their history. They neither understood the character or the system of their new foes. Perpetually immersed in local feuds, they had not gained ground either in military or national spirit since their old wars with the Danes. The men of one province cared little



what misfortune befall those of another, provided their own territory was safe. Single, each of them had been hitherto able to cope with foes as they were accustomed to; but where combined action could alone suffice there was nothing to unite them; they had no sentiments in common—no center, no rallying principles.

MacCarthy, king of Desmond, was the first Irish prince to pay homage to Henry. Marching from Waterford to Lismore, and thence to Cashel, Henry was met near the latter town by Donnell O'Brien, king of Thomond, who swore fealty to him, and surrendered to him his city of Limerick. Afterwards there came in succession to do homage, MacGilla Patrick, prince of Ossory, O'Phelan, prince of the Deisies, and various other chieftains of Leath Mogha. All were most courteously received, many of them were of course not a little dazzled by the splendor of Henry's court and his array of steel-clad knights; some were perhaps glad to acknowledge a sovereign powerful enough to deliver them from the petty warfare with which they were harassed, and exhausted, but none of them understood Anglo-Norman capacity, or could have imagined that in paying homage to Henry as a liege lord they were conveying to him the absolute dominion and ownership of their ancestral territories.

So well was it known in Ireland that Henry disapproved of the invasion of that country by Strongbow and the other adventurers, that the people of Wexford, who had got Fitz-Stephen into their hands, pretended to make a merit of their own exploit, and sent a deputation to Henry on his arrival to deliver to him the captive knight as one who had made war without his sovereign's permission. Henry kept up the farce by retaining FitzStephen for some time in chains and then restored him to liberty.

From Cashel Henry returned to Waterford, and then proceeded to Dublin where he was received in great state, and where a temporary pavilion, constructed in the Irish fashion of twigs or wicker work, was erected for him outside the walls, no building in the city being spacious enough to accommodate his court. Here he remained to pass the festival of Christmas, and such of the Irish as were attracted thither by curiosity were entertained by him with a degree of magnificence and urbanity well calculated to win their admiration. Among the Irish princes who paid their homage to the English king in Dublin were O'Carroll of Oriel, and the veteran



O'Rourke; but the monarch Roderic, though thus abandoned by his oldest and most powerful ally, the chief of Breffny, as he had been already by so many others of his vassals, still continued to maintain an independent attitude. He collected an army on the banks of the Shannon, and seemed to resolve to defend the frontiers of his kingdom of Connaught to the last; thus regaining by this bold and dignified demeanor some at least of the esteem and sympathy which by his former weakness of character he had forfeited. Henry, whose object appeared to be not fighting but parade did not march against the Irish monarch, but sent De Lacy and FitzAdelm to treat with him; and Roderic, on his own sovereignty being recognized, was, it is said, induced to pay homage to Henry through his ambassadors, as it was customary in that age for one king to pay to another and more potent sovereign. We have no Irish authority, however, for this act of submission; and as to the northern princes, they still withheld all recognition of the invaders' sway.

At Henry's desire, a synod was held at Cashel in the beginning of this year (1172). It was presided over by Christian, bishop of Lismore, who was then apostolic legate, and was attended by St. Laurence of Dublin, Catholicus O'Duffy, of Tuam, and Donald O'Hullucan, of Cashel, with their suffragan bishops, together with abbots, archdeacons, etc.; Ralph, archdeacon of Landaff, and Nicholas, a royal chaplain, being present on the part of the king. It was decreed at this synod that the prohibition of marriage within the canonical degrees of consanguinity and affinity should be more strictly enforced; that children should be catechised before the church door, and baptized in the fonts in those churches appointed for that purpose; that tithes of all the produce of the land should be paid to the clergy; that church lands and other ecclesiastical property should be exempt from the exactions of laymen in the shape of periodical entertainment and livery, etc., and that the clergy should not be liable to any share of the Eric or blood fine levied on the kindred of a man guilty of homicide. There was also a decree regulating wills, by which one-third of a man's movable property, after payment of his debts, was to be left to his legitimate children, if he had any; another to his wife, if she survived; and the remaining third for his funeral obsequies.

These decrees constitute the boasted reform of the Irish Church introduced by Henry II. It will be observed that they

indicate no trace of doctrinal error to be corrected, or even of gross abuse in discipline, unless it be the too general use of private baptism, and the celebration of marriage within the prohibited degrees, which at that time extended to very remote relationships. But the subject of this synod leads us to an incident of the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland which has been a fertile source of controversy—namely, the so-called subjection of Ireland to the dominion of the king of England, by the bulls of Adrian IV. and Alexander III.

The temporal power exercised by the popes in the middle ages opens up a question too general for discussion here. It is enough for us to know that modern investigation has removed much of the misrepresentation by which it was assailed. Irrespective of religious considerations, we see in the Roman pontiffs of that period the steadfast friends of order and enlightenment, in their power the bulwark of the oppressed people against feudal tyranny; of civilization against barbarism; and we should consider well the circumstances under which they acted, and the received opinions of the age, before we condemn these Viceregents of Christ for proceedings in which their authority was invoked in the temporal affairs of nations. If this authority was sometimes perverted to their own purposes by ambitious kings, or its exercise surreptitiously obtained, that was not the fault of the popes nor of the principle; as we shall find illustrated in the case we are now about to consider.

Nicholas Breakspere, an Englishman, was elected pope under the title of Adrian IV., December 3d, 1154, and Henry II, who had come to the throne of England about a month earlier, sent soon after to congratulate his countryman on his elevation. This embassy was followed by another insidious one, the object of which was to represent to the pope that religion and morality were reduced to the lowest ebb in the neighboring island of Ireland; that society there was torn to pieces by factions, and plunged in the most barbarous excesses, that there was no respect for spiritual authority; and that the king of England solicited the sanction of his Holiness to visit that unhappy country in order to restore discipline and morals, and to compel the Irish to make a respectable provision for the church, such as already existed in England. This negotiation, which indicates how long the idea of invading Ireland was entertained by the English king, was entrusted by Henry to John of Salisbury, chaplain to Theo-

bald, archbishop of Canterbury, who urged, according to an opinion then received, that Constantine the Great had made a donation of all Christian islands to the successor of Peter; that, therefore, the pope, as owner of the island of Ireland, had the power to place it under the dominion of Henry; and that he was bound to exercise that power in the interests of religion and morality.

A hostile authority confesses that "the popes were in general superior to the age in which they lived", but we have no right to expect that, on a subject of this temporal and political nature, they should have been so far in advance of the ideas of their times as to anticipate the political knowledge and discoveries of subsequent ages. We must also recollect that, however exaggerated the statements made to Adrian about Ireland may have been, they were not wholly without foundation. It is not consistent with human nature that society should not have been disorganized more or less by the state of turbulence in which we know, from our authentic history, that this country was so long plunged at that period. It was precisely the period when the moral character of Ireland had suffered most in the estimation of foreign nations. St. Bernard's vivid picture of the vices and abuses against which St. Malachy had to struggle, in one part of Ireland, had only just then been presented to the world. St. Malachy was not long dead, and his reforms were less known than the abuses which had so loudly called for them. The recent efforts of the Irish prelates and clergy to restore discipline in the church, and piety and morals among the people, had only begun to produce their effects. Vices may have been as prevalent in other countries, but this did not render Ireland stainless. In fact, although Pope Adrian IV. had been the pupil of a learned monk, named Marianus, at Paris, and had other sources of information on the subject, we are not to wonder that he should have formed a low estimate of the state of religion and morals in Ireland, and lent a credulous ear to the exaggerated representations of Henry's emissary. Little knowing of the mind of the ambitious king, he, therefore, addressed to him his memorable letter, or bull, which was accompanied by a gold ring enriched with a precious emerald, as a sign of investiture.

The importance of this bull in our history has been monstrously exaggerated. It can have had little, if any, influence on the destinies of Ireland. After the bull had been obtained

on a false pretense and to give a color to an ambitious design, a council of state was held in England to consider the projected invasion, but partly through deference to his mother, the empress, who was opposed to it, and partly from the pressure of other affairs, the project was for the present abandoned by Henry, and the papal document deposited in the archives of Winchester. Thirteen years after we have seen Dermot MacMurrough at the feet of Henry, imploring English aid. A few years more pass away, and we behold the English monarch making a triumphant progress through Leinster, and receiving the submission of the kings of Desmond and Thomond, and Ossory, and Breffny, and Oriel, if not that of Roderic himself; yet, not one word is breathed, all this time, about the grant from Adrian IV. We have no ground for supposing that the existence of that grant was even known to the Irish prelates, who, following the example of their respective princes, also paid their homage, and assembled at the call of Henry in the synod of Cashel; nor does one word about it appear to have transpired among the clergy or people of Ireland until it was promulgated, together with a confirmatory bull of Alexander III. at a synod held in Waterford in 1175, some twenty years after the grant had been originally made, and when the success of the invasion had been an accomplished fact. Some Irish historians have questioned the authenticity of Pope Adrian's bull; but there appears to be no solid reason for doubt upon the subject. Others, like Dr. Keating, assign, as a ground for the right assumed by the pope, a tradition that Donough, son of Brian Borumha, had made a present of the crown of Ireland to the reigning pontiff, when he went on a pilgrimage to Rome about the year 1064, but this story merits no attention. The equally fabulous donation of Constantine the Great, even if it had been made, could not have included Ireland, to which the power of the Roman empire never had extended. Irish Catholic historians have always been sufficiently free in their animadversions on the "English pope," as Adrian IV. is styled, for his grant; but a consideration of the real circumstances, as we have endeavored to explain them, would show how unwarrantable such severity has been. The character of that pontiff was altogether too exalted to afford any ground for supposing that he acted from an unworthy motive. We have no reason to think that his intentions were other than the religious ones he expresses, or that they were not wholly



opposed to the ambitious views of the English monarch; and we know how utterly the conditions specified in the bull were disregarded in the Anglo-Norman invasion and subsequent government of Ireland. Some show of fulfilling these conditions was necessary, and hence the pretended reform of the Irish Church, which the synod of Cashel was summoned to effect. We have enumerated the decrees of that synod to show in what the reform consisted. The prelates assembled at Cashel, and acting only from a sense of duty, joined in a report or wrote letters for transmission to the then pope, Alexander III., and it would appear that whatever faults were laid to the charge of the Irish were, in this document or documents, neither diminished or excused. The archdeacon of Llandaff accompanied this report by a more ample one, in which the representations as to the vices of the people, the power and magnanimity of the king, and the salutary effect which his authority had already produced, were no doubt highly colored. Just as Adrian's letter had been granted to Henry before that prince's vicious character had been developed, and before he had begun to wage war on the church in England; so had the same unprincipled and hypocritical monarch contrived to expiate his crimes in the eyes of the pope, and to exhibit himself as an humble son of the church before Alexander was called upon to interpose in his favor. Hence, appeased by the king's submission, which was the humblest and seemingly the most contrite possible, and with the bull of his predecessor, Adrian, and the reports he had just received from Ireland before him, the sovereign pontiff was induced to confirm the former grant. At the same time he issued three other letters, dated September 20th, one addressed to Henry himself, approving of his proceedings; another to "the kings and princes of Hibernia," commending them for their "voluntary" and "prudent" submission to Henry, admonishing them to preserve unshaken the fealty which they had sworn to him, and expressing joy at the prospect of peace and tranquillity for their country, "with God's help, through the power of the same king." The third letter was addressed to the four archbishops of Ireland and their suffragans; and in it the pope refers to the information which he had received from "other reliable sources," as well as from their communications relative to "the enormous vices with which the Irish people were infected"; he designates that people as "barbarous, rude, and



ignorant of the divine law"; rejoices at the improvement which had already begun to manifest itself in their manners; and exhorts and commands the prelates to use all diligence in promoting and maintaining a reform so happily commenced, and in taking care that the fidelity plighted to the king should not be violated. Such is the history of those famous papal grants, of which sectarian industry, as well as wounded national feelings, has greatly magnified the importance, and misrepresented the origin.

Besides the synod of Cashel, which was invoked for ecclesiastical purposes, a council was held about this time at Lismore, in which it was decreed that the laws and customs of England should be introduced into Ireland, for the use of the British subjects settling there. The native Irish, however, still lived under their own laws and traditional usages; but the protection and benefits of English law were extended in process of time to five Irish septs or families, who in the law documents of the period are called the "five bloods." These were the O'Neills of Ulster, the O'Melaghlinns of Meath, the O'Conors of Connaught, the O'Briens of Thomond, and the MacMurrroughs of Leinster. It was several hundred years later, namely, in the reign of James I, when English law was extended to Ireland in general, and even then it was found necessary to modify it for the purpose of adaptation.

Henry made a new grant of the principality of Leinster to Strongbow, subject to the feudal condition of homage and military service. He appointed Hugh de Lacy justiciary of Ireland, and granted him the territory of Meath, to be held by similar feudal service. A large territory in the south of Ireland was conferred about this time on FitzGerald, the ancestor of the earls of Desmond; and thus was commenced, on a large scale, that wholesale confiscation by which the land of Ireland was taken indiscriminately from its ancient possessors, and granted, without any show of title, to the Anglo-Norman adventurers. This was only a repetition of what had taken place in England itself on the conquest of that country by William the Norman. The Saxons incurred the contempt of their invaders from the facility with which they suffered themselves to be subdued, and their property was everywhere confiscated; so that the Saxon element in the English character affords, historically speaking, no ground for national boasting. The descendants of the plunderers,

equally rapacious, found a new field for spoliation in Ireland, and carried out their old system there with a total disregard of both mercy and justice. Subduing a territory generally signified among the ancient Irish only a transitory act of plunder or the exacting of hostages. With the Anglo-Normans of the days of Henry II. and of aftertimes, to obtain superiority of power in a country, whether by conquest or otherwise, signified, on the contrary, the complete transfer to themselves of every foot of land in the country, and the plunder, and, if possible, extermination of its ancient population.

Nor did the Church of Ireland fare better than the laity, notwithstanding the provision of Pope Adrian's bull, that it should be preserved intact and inviolate. Giraldus Cambrensis, describing what he witnessed himself, and certainly without any friendly leaning towards the Irish, says: "The miserable clergy are reduced to beggary in the island. The cathedral churches mourn, having been robbed by the afore-said persons (the leading adventurers) and others along with them, or who came over after them, of the lands and ample estates which had been formerly granted to them faithfully and devoutly. And thus the exalting of the church has been changed into despoiling or plundering of the church." And again he confesses that "while we (the Anglo-Normans) conferred nothing on the church of Christ in our new principality, we not only did not think it worthy of any important bounty, or of due honor; but even, having immediately taken away the lands and possessions, have excited ourselves either to mutilate or abrogate its former dignities and ancient privileges."

Besides the princely rewards bestowed on Hugh de Lacy, as already mentioned, he was also appointed lord constable; Strongbow is supposed to have borne the dignity of lord marshal; the office of high steward or seneschal was conferred on Sir Bertram de Vernon; and Sir Theobald Walter, ancestor of the earls of Ormonde, was appointed to the then high office of king's butler, whence his descendants derived their family name. By the creation of these and other offices, the king organized a system of colonial government in Ireland.

Intercourse with England having been for a long while interrupted by tempestuous weather, Henry, while at Wexford, whither he had removed from Dublin, at length received alarming intelligence, to the effect that an investigation rela-

tive to the murder of St. Thomas a Becket was proceeding by the pope's orders in Normandy, and that if he did not speedily appear there to defend himself, his dominions were threatened with an interdict. He accordingly prepared to depart from Ireland without waiting to complete his arrangements there, and sailed on Easter Monday, April 17th. On landing the same day in Wales, he went as a pilgrim to St. David's church, and thence hastened to Normandy, where he humbled himself in the presence of the papal legates and of the bishops and barons, sparing no humiliation to purge himself of his crimes in the eyes of the sovereign pontiff, who thus, as we have already seen, became reconciled to him.

The city of Dublin was granted by Henry to the inhabitants of Bristol, and Hugh de Lacy left as governor, with Maurice FitzGerald and Robert FitzStephen to assist him, each of the three having a guard of twenty knights. The city of Waterford was given in charge to Humphrey de Bohun, who had under him Robert FitzBernard and Hugh de Gunde-ville, with a company of twenty knights, while Wexford was committed to William FitzAdelm, whose lieutenants were Philip de Hastings and Philip de Breuse, with a similar guard. Henry also ordered strong castles to be built without delay in these towns; and thus after a six months' stay in Ireland, did he abandon that unhappy country as a prey to a host of greedy, upstart adventurers, whom he enriched with its spoils, that they might have an interest in defending their common plunder.

(England had now established her power in Ireland. We shall not follow her course during the reign of her various sovereigns from the twelfth to the eighteenth century, for these were troublous times in Ireland, illumined, no doubt, by many acts of daring and self-sacrifice on the part of her devoted sons, notably by the O'Sullivans and O'Briens of the South, and the princely O'Neills and O'Donnells of the North, but nevertheless England continued to hold her own by the application of her penal laws and other iniquitous enactments. We shall take up the thread of Ireland's history in 1782, the period made glorious by the abilities and patriotism of the immortal Henry Grattan, preceded by a complete account of the Wexford rebellion, which was forced upon the country as an excuse for the passing of the Act of Union.—Compilers.)







SECTION III.

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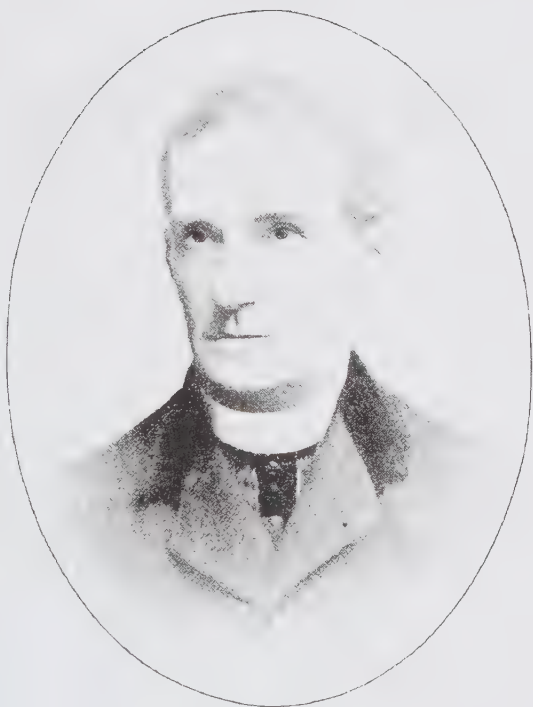
## THE RISING OF '98

BY

REV. P. F. KAVANAUGH, O. S. F.

CONTAINING

HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF WEXFORD—THE BATTLES OF ROSS,  
OULART, AND VINEGAR HILL—SKETCHES OF THE WEXFORD  
LEADERS — FATHERS JOHN AND MICHAEL MURPHY —  
ATROCITIES OF THE ORANGEMEN IN WEXFORD—  
EXAMPLES OF IRISH HEROISM  
AND GENEROSITY



REV. P. F. KAVANAUGH, O. S. F.

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## CHAPTER I.

DESCRIPTION OF WEXFORD AND ITS PEOPLE—MAKING INFORMERS—  
BURNING OF HOUSES AND OTHER PERSECUTIONS.

While the insurrection of 1798 manifested itself in a series of feeble and desultory attempts in the northern counties of Leinster, which the Government found little difficulty in repressing, their attention was imperatively called to its outbreak in another district, in the most southern county in the same province, where it burst forth with a violence as great as it was unexpected. Wexford was the stage upon which the last and most thrilling scene of the tragedy was to be enacted. So little apprehension was entertained by the authorities of any serious disturbance in that county that, in addition to the recently-embodied yeomanry corps, only about five hundred of the regular army had been stationed there. Soon, however, the whole available military power of England, under her ablest generals, was to be gathered together within its narrow limits—a force greater than in after years sufficed to overthrow the conqueror of Europe upon the plains of Waterloo.

Before entering into the details of this remarkable struggle, and the events that immediately preceded it, we deem it not amiss to furnish our readers with a brief description of that county and its inhabitants.

Mr. T. D. McGee, in his excellent "History of Ireland," thus expresses himself on the subject: "Wexford, geographically, is a peculiar county, and its people are a peculiar people. The county fills up the southeastern corner of the island, with the sea south and east, the River Barrow to the west, and the woods and mountains of Carlow and Wicklow to the north. It is about fifty miles long by twenty-four broad; the surface undulating and rising into numerous groups of detached hills, two or more of which are generally visible from each conspicuous summit. Almost in the midst flows

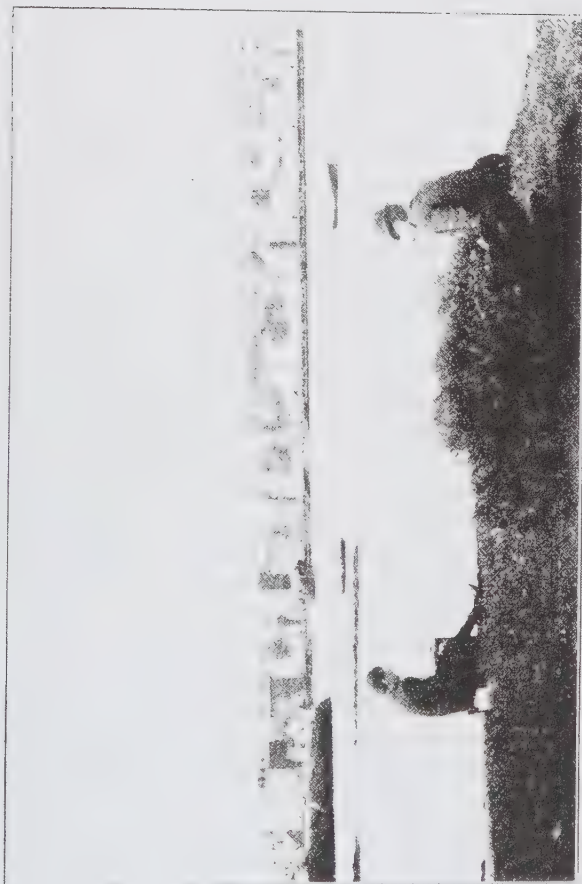
the River Slaney, springing from a lofty Wicklow peak, which sends down, on its northern slope, the better known River Liffey. On the estuary of the Slaney, some seventy miles south of Dublin, stands the county town, the traveler journeying to which, by the usual route then taken, passed in succession through Arklow, Gorey, Ferns, Enniscorthy, and other places of less consequence, though familiar enough to the fiery records of 1798. Northwestward, the only road in those days from Carlow to Kilkenny crossed the Blackstairs at Scollagh Gap, entering the county at Newtownbarry, the ancient Bunclody; westward, some twenty miles, on the River Barrow, stands New Ross, often mentioned in this history, the road from which to the county town passes through Scullabogue Taghmon (Ta'mon), the former at the foot of Carrick-byrne rock, the latter at the base of what is rather hyperbolically called 'the mountain of Forth.' South and west of the town, towards the estuary of Waterford, lie the Baronies of Forth and Bargy, a greater part of the population of which, even within our own time, spoke the language Chaucer and Spenser wrote, and retained many of the characteristics of their Saxon, Flemish, and Cambrian ancestors. Through this singular district lay the road towards Duncannon fort, on Waterford harbor, with branches running off to Bannow, Ballyhack, and Dunbrody."

The Wexford people can hardly be called a Celtic race. The surnames of Lacy, Prendergast, Fitzgerald, Devereux, Whitty, Walsh, Synnot, Furlong, Harvey, Boxwell, and Brown indicate their descent from Norman, Welsh, and Flemish ancestors; while such names as Cornick, Godkin, and Lambert remind us of the latest addition to the foreign element in the time of the redoubted Cromwell. The Celtic element, if we judge by the far greater frequency of such names as the above, forms but a small proportion of the population. The Irish language has long since wholly disappeared, and even such unmistakably Irish names as are yet found have dropped the ancient prefixes of O' and Mac.

It is strange, indeed, that such a population should have offered to the English the fiercest and most determined resistance they ever encountered in Ireland, while the people of the purely Celtic counties "made no sign," but remained sunk in disgraceful apathy, while the fortunes of their native country hung trembling in the balance. The population of Wexford, in 1798, was, according to Mr. Bushe's estimate, 132,912







TOWN OF WEXFORD.

"We are the Boys of Wexford,  
Who fought with heart and hand  
To burst in twain our galling chain  
And free our native land."

inhabitants. That of the town of Wexford itself was upwards of 9,000 souls. Others have estimated the entire population at 150,000, which I judge to be nearer the truth. Treating of the social condition of the county, Mr. Hay makes the ensuing observation: "The county of Wexford had long been remarkable for the peaceful demeanor of its inhabitants, and their good behavior and industry have been held out as an exemplar for other parts of Ireland. So little and so seldom infested with disturbance and riots of any kind, that an execution for a capital crime rarely took place there; and, in the calendar of its criminals, it has as few on record as any part either of Great Britain or Ireland. This county bore such a reputation that landed property was considered of higher value in it than in many other parts of the country, purchasers not hesitating to advance some years' rental for lands in the county of Wexford than for the like in most other parts of Ireland." But as Mr. Hay was himself a Wexford man, and might not unreasonably be suspected of partiality for his native county, I shall take the liberty of quoting a few extracts from the work of an English gentleman, published at a later period, in which he treats of the same subject. After lauding at some length the superior civilization of the Wexford people, he asks, "To what can this great difference in the appearance of the country, in the state of cultivation, in the progress of civilization, in comfort, in cleanliness, in order and good conduct be owing—for this county is in Ireland?" This is an Englishman; he naturally attributes it to their descent, derived from Strongbow's little army, all natives of Pembrokehire, which, though situate in Wales, he asserts to have had a Saxon population. In continuation he remarks: "In the baronies of Forth and Bargy, at this day, it is difficult to see any marked difference between the appearance of the country or the people and England or its population. There are the same cleanliness, order, and neatness. Great industry prevails amongst a peaceable and well-disposed people. . . . Comfort and contentment, the rewards of industry, are everywhere seen." We have thought it fitting to furnish our readers with the foregoing extracts from an authority that even those who would afford but slight credence to statements less evidently impartial must respect, as a conclusive answer to the calumnies heaped upon a peaceable and well-disposed people by certain authors whose works have obtained a wide circulation. We ourselves in our days, have

been intimately acquainted with some of those men described by Musgrave and Maxwell, and other writers of their bigoted and narrow-minded class, as ferocious and ignorant peasants—and we must say that we have never met with finer specimens of a manly and intelligent race. Amidst the numerous Catholic peasantry of Wexford there abode a great number of small landed proprietors. The majority of these were good landlords, and often kind neighbors, willing to live on terms of amity with their humbler fellow-countrymen, although they differed from them in religious tenets. It is true that even these, well-disposed as they were, regarded the Catholics as a far inferior class, and were little inclined to admit them to any degree of social equality. This class included men of the highest standing in the county, and of the most extensive landed possessions. But, unhappily for the peace of the country, there existed at the time another class, which rather stood on the boundary of the aristocratic circle than fairly within its area, whose principles and practice were essentially different.

For the most part meanly born, or if well born of ruined fortune and of spendthrift habits, they had emerged from obscurity into baneful prominence by taking advantage of the encouragement given by the Government to all who were willing to become their instruments in hunting down the adherents of the ancient creed. The men, thus encouraged by Government, were violent in their denunciations of Papists—untiringly energetic in the discovery of the disloyal schemes which, it seems, these unfortunate Papists were always hatching. Every post carried long epistles from these worthies to the authorities of the Castle, containing accounts of the discoveries they had made of conspiracies, formed by the same Papists, of course, having for their end the overthrow of the British Government in his Majesty's kingdom of Ireland. In every private circle to which they were admitted, and in every public meeting at which they assisted, they poured forth revilings, accusations, and threats against the objects of their hatred. Of this class Mr. Hay speaks in the following terms:

“Slaves to their superiors, but tyrants to their inferiors, these needy adventurers became the tools of prevailing power; justices of peace were selected from this class, and these, by this degree of elevation (certainly to them the station is an exalted one), think themselves raised to a level of equality with the most respectable gentlemen of the country. But their

ignorance is so preposterous, and their behavior so assuming, that men of education, talents, and fortune are induced to withhold themselves from a situation they would otherwise grace, as it might oblige them to confer with other fellows with whom they would not by any means hold communion or keep company. Thus are the very men who ought to be the magistrates of the country, and who would cheerfully accept the office, deterred from holding commissions of the peace; while the justice and police of the community are left to ignorant presuming and intemperate upstarts, devoid of all qualification and endowment, except that alone, if it may be termed such, of unconditional submission and obedience to the controlling nod of their boasted patrons. If they faithfully adhere to this, they may go all lengths to raise their consequence, and enhance their estimation with the multitude. These creatures have, therefore, the effrontery to push themselves forward on every occasion, and after a series of habitual acts of turpitude, whenever an opportunity offers itself, they become the scourges and firebrands of the country."

Thus it was that the Government, instead of treating these men as disturbers of the public peace, sowers of discord, hatred, and suspicion amongst a people who had hitherto lived in some degree of peace and harmony, evinced its approbation of their conduct by bestowing upon them honors which it denied to worthier men, and arming them with authority to carry into execution all their nefarious schemes. Besides being vested with the magisterial power, they generally were appointed to the command of a corps of yeomanry; and at the head of these myrmidons they roamed through the country to the terror of the unfortunate inhabitants, whose lives and properties were now wholly at their mercy, since the Act of Indemnity had freed them from all danger of being called to account for their excesses. In their train followed a number of vile satellites who were at all times prepared to swear to the guilt of anyone whom their employers deemed to consider disloyal. Orangemen themselves, they claimed for the members of the society to which they belonged, a species of monopoly in loyalty, so that outside their unhallowed circle there was no safety for any man. Liberal Protestant gentlemen were, in their eyes, as much objects of suspicion and hatred as the Papists themselves.

And it is but fair to say that Protestant gentlemen were



found virtuous enough to earn the detestation of such vile men, whose hatred was their highest eulogy.

But the liberal magistrates, being aware that the course pursued by the persecutors was approved and sanctioned by the Government, deemed it both useless and dangerous to interfere. Had they entertained any doubt upon the subject, it would have been wholly dissipated by an incident which took place during this period—the arrest and imprisonment of Messrs. Colclough and Harvey, whose sense of justice, stronger than their prudence, led them openly to denounce what they deemed the most cruel and wicked oppression. Some persons may be inclined to condemn the silence of others at such a time as cowardly and guilty, but not all men have courage to advocate the cause of the oppressed when tyranny, armed with irresistible power, is seated upon the tribunal. The actual force of these instruments of a cruel policy might be in itself contemptible, but the sanction of the law and the whole strength of the Government rendered them truly formidable. At a later period it was thought prudent to restrain, and even to punish them, but for the time they were useful, and none might presume to interfere with or thwart their proceedings till their task was completed, and the people, maddened with oppression, rose as one man to shake a yoke that galled them beyond endurance. To discover and to hunt down the members of the United Irish Society was the object to which they chiefly directed their efforts. To discover them they needed informers, and in case these were not at hand, they undertook to make them. In this species of manufacture they were skillful workmen. The pitch-cap, the scourge, and the rope of the executioner were the instruments they employed. Mr Alexander, a respectable Protestant inhabitant of Ross, gives us an account of the tortures inflicted upon two men named Driscoll and Fitzpatrick, in order to compel them to act this infamous part. The first-named of these men was half-strangled three times, and flogged four times, to force him to swear informations, but continued, notwithstanding, steadfast in his refusal to do what was required of him. The other man, Fitzpatrick, a poor village schoolmaster, old and infirm, was engaged in teaching his little school when a magistrate entered and tendered to him the oath of allegiance. The poor man, having taken the oath with great willingness, was informed by his visitor that in further proof of his loyalty he must swear to the whereabouts of all the pikes and the



owners of them in his neighborhood of which he had any knowledge. In vain he protested that he knew nothing about pikes or insurgents, and consequently could not, without perjury, swear to what he had no knowledge of. His protestations were of no avail. He was forthwith conveyed to Ross, and there flogged with great severity, of which flogging Mr. Alexander was a witness, and "it was not (he adds) with dry eyes, that I saw the punishment inflicted on this humble pioneer of literature."

These barbarities became of such frequent occurrence that the terror-stricken people abandoned their houses and sought refuge in the open fields. Concerning the burning of houses and the forcing of people by torture to become informers, Mr. Hay makes the following remarks:

"The proclamation of the county of Wexford having given greater scope to the ingenuity of magistrates to devise means of quelling all symptoms of rebellion, as well as of using every exertion to procure discoveries, they soon fell to burning of houses wherein pikes or other offensive weapons were discovered, no matter how brought there; but they did not stop here, for the dwellings of suspected persons, and those from which any of the inhabitants were found absent at night, were also consumed. This circumstance of absence from the houses very generally prevailed through the country, although there were the strictest orders forbidding it. This was occasioned at first, as was before observed, from the apprehension of the Orangemen, but afterwards proceeded from the actual experiences of torture by the people from the yeomen and magistrates. Some, too, abandoned their homes from fear of being whipped, if on being apprehended confessions satisfactory to the magistrates could neither be given or extorted, and this infliction many persons seemed to fear more than death itself. Many unfortunate men, who were taken in their houses, were strung up as it were to be hanged, but were let down now and then to try if strangulation would oblige them to become informers. After these and the like experiences, several persons languished for some time, and at length perished in consequence of them. Smiths and carpenters, whose assistance was considered indispensable in the fabrication of pikes, were pointed out on evidence of their trades as the first and fittest objects of torture. But the sagacity of some magistrates became at length so acute, from habit and exercise, that they discerned a United Irishman even at the first glance, and

their zeal never suffered any person whom they deigned to honor with such distinction to pass off without convincing proof of their attention. Many innocent persons were thus taken up (continues the same author) while peaceably engaged in their own private concerns, walking along the road or passing through the market in the several towns, without any previous accusation, but in consequence of military whim, or the caprice of magisterial loyalty; and those who had been at market, and passing by unnoticed, had the news of a public exhibition to bring home, for the unfortunate victims thus seized upon were instantly subjected to the torture of public whipping. People of timid dispositions therefore avoided going to market, fearing that they might be forced to display the same spectacle. Provisions, of course, became dear, for want of the usual supply in the market towns; and the military, to redress this evil, went out into the country and brought in what they wanted, at what price they pleased, the owners thinking themselves well treated if they got but half the value of their goods; and, in case of their second visit, happy if they escaped unhurt, which, however, was not always the case, and thus were the minds of the people brought to admit such powerful impressions of terror that death itself was sometimes the consequence."

So great was the terror-inspired torture so frequently employed that men expired from the very apprehension of being subjected to it. Of this Rev. Mr. Gordon gives an instance: "Whether an insurrection in the then existing state of the kingdom would have taken place in the county of Wexford, or in case of its eruption, how far less formidable and sanguinary it would have been if no acts of severity had been committed by the soldiery, the yeomen, or their supplementary associates, without the direct authority of their superiors, or command of the magistrate, is a question which I am not able positively to answer. In the neighborhood of Gorey, if I am not mistaken, the terror of the whippings was in particular so great that the people would have been extremely glad to renounce forever all notions of opposition to government if they could have been assured of permission to remain in a state of quietness. As an instance of this terror, I shall relate the following fact

"On the morning of the 23d of May a laboring man named Denis McDaniel came to my house with looks of the utmost consternation and dismay, and confessed to me that

he had taken the United Irishman's oath and had paid for a pike, with which he had not yet been furnished, nineteen pence halfpenny, to one Kilty, a smith, who had administered the oath to him and many others. Whilst I sent my eldest son, who was a lieutenant of yeomanry, to arrest Kilty, I exhorted McDaniel to surrender himself to a magistrate and make his confession; but this he positively refused, saying that he should in that case be lashed to make him produce a pike, which he had not, and to confess what he knew not. I then advised him, as the only alternative, to remain quietly at home, promising that if he should be arrested on the information of others I would represent the case to the magistrates. He took my advice, but the fear of arrest and lashing had so taken possession of his thoughts that he could neither eat nor sleep, and on the morning of the 25th he fell on his face and expired in a little grove near my house.' "

Authors differ considerably in their statements concerning the extent and influence of the United Irish Society in Wexford. Mr Hay who, on most points, is an excellent authority, seems convinced "that the system of the United Irishmen had not diffused itself through the county of Wexford to the extent so confidently affirmed by Sir Richard Musgrave, whose veracity in almost every other instance appears equally questionable. The truth is that no authentic proof existed at the time to support these arrogant assertions, and subsequent information confirms how little the county of Wexford was concerned in that conspiracy, as no return appears of its being organized in the discoveries of the secret committees of the Houses of Lords and Commons. It would be contrary to truth, however, to say that there were no United Irishmen in the county of Wexford; but by every statement worthy of credit that has ever appeared their numbers were comparatively fewer in this than in any other county in Ireland." Treating of the same subject, the Rev Mr Gordon remarks: "The county of Wexford had not been otherwise than very imperfectly organized "

Sir Richard Musgrave, with a view to justify the cruelties exercised by his brother Orangemen, the persecuting magistrates of Wexford, affirms the county to have been completely organized. But no statement put forward by such a man can be regarded as deserving of any credit, being notorious for his virulent and reckless mendacity, heedless of what assertion he made to vilify a people for whom he cherished a most

envenomed hatred. In the "Memoirs of Miles Byrne," the "Macamores" (the ancient name of the present baronies of Shilmaher) are mentioned as well organized.

Mr. T. D. McGee holds a contrary opinion. In his "History of Ireland" we find the following:

"The most formidable insurrection—indeed the only real formidable one—broke out in the county of Wexford, a county in which it was stated there were not 200 United Irishmen, and which Lord Edward Fitzgerald had altogether omitted from his official list of counties organized in the month of February."

From these conflicting statements it is not easy to deduce any very definite conclusion, but having weighed them all we may hazard an opinion that the organization existed in the county for a considerable time before the outbreak of the insurrection, but made little progress owing both to the opposition offered to it by priests as a secret society, and to the peculiar character of the Wexford people, who have been always averse to secret societies of every description; but that driven to despair by the extreme measures adopted by the Government, they resolved upon resistance and then began to take the oath in great numbers.

The reign of terror which we have feebly endeavored to describe did not attain its full height till the arrival of Lord Kingsborough at the head of the merciless corps called the "North Cork." Their arrival took place in the beginning of April, about three weeks before the proclamation of the county. This infamous horde, who came to riot in the blood of an unoffending people and finally to perish themselves by the vengeance of the same people roused to madness by oppression, were enlisted from the dregs of the Orange population of Cork. However, the infamy attached to their memory casts no dark shadow on the fair name of that patriotic county, for although they lived amongst the people they were by no means of them, and would have willingly exercised the same cruelty upon them as they did on the inhabitants of Wexford.

These cruel mercenaries were adepts in the villainous arts by which the most peaceable are roused into vengeful retaliation; and the unfortunate people amongst whom they came found that even the native yeomen might be exceeded in cruelty. The latter, indeed, soon became emulous imitators of the newcomers and evinced that they lacked not the will to



rival them in deeds of ruthless cruelty. What pen can adequately describe the horrors which were now daily exhibited! Never, surely in any civilized country, were such scenes beheld as were now enacted under the eyes and with the sanction of the English Government.

Had the history of these events been written only by those who might be considered partial to the sufferers there might be room to impugn its truthfulness, but men who, in principles and politics widely differed, have confirmed it by their united testimony.

But we prefer to hurry over these scenes of horror, merely tarrying amongst them sufficiently long enough to see by what means a peaceable people were driven into armed resistance to constituted power—a resistance which, though it proved unavailing, yet gave a lesson to tyrants not soon forgotten. The chief actors in those scenes of blood were the North Cork before mentioned, and to the diabolical ingenuity of their leader must be attributed the invention of the pitch-cap. This most dreaded instrument of torture was a spacious cap, made of strong, thick paper, shaped so as to cover the entire head, fitting close to it. This cap, being previously smeared inside with boiling pitch, was placed on the head of the individual condemned to the torture, and pressed down upon it so that the heated pitch should come into contact with the scalp, on which the hair had been cut short that the victim might experience all the intensity of the torment. So great was the agony experienced by the unhappy wretches subjected to this cruelty that often, bursting from the grasp of the torturers, in the madness of the intolerable pain, they dashed their brains out against some neighboring wall, and thus put an end at once to their life and misery.

But for such as were not driven by excessive pain to self-destruction, an additional torment remained, for when the pitch had cooled and the cap become firmly attached to the head of the sufferer, it was seized and torn violently off the head, bringing away with it all the hair and oftentimes the entire scalp, leaving the wretched victim writhing in agonies to which death would have been mercy.

This species of torture, which might be duly deemed a refinement upon the scalping of the North American Indians, must not be thought to have been seldom exercised, for it was one of the most common and was used as a means of extorting evidence to sustain unfounded accusations. It was inflicted



without trial at the mere caprice of every petty officer of yeomanry or militia. As these bands of torturers and executioners traversed the country, the unfortunate peasantry whose homes they approached fled in terror to hide themselves in the fields, and from their places of concealment beheld the progress of the flames that consumed the humble roof that should no more afford them shelter. While these horrors were in progress, the magistrates of the county assembled at Wexford and commanded the inhabitants under pain of death to deliver all arms in their possession within fourteen days.

The result of their deliberations appeared in the following notice which was distributed through the county:

“NOTICE — We, the high sheriff and magistrates of the county of Wexford, assembled at sessions, held at the county courthouse in Wexford this 23d day of May, 1798, have received the most clear and unequivocal evidence, private as well as public, that the system and plans of those deluded persons who style themselves and are commonly known by the name of United Irishmen, have been generally adopted by the inhabitants of the several parishes in this county, who have provided themselves with pikes and other arms for the purpose of carrying their plans into execution. And whereas we have received information that the inhabitants of some parts of this county have, within these past few days, returned to their allegiance, surrendering their arms and confessing the errors of their past misconduct, now we, the high sheriff and magistrates assembled as aforesaid, do give this public notice that if, within the space of fourteen days from the date hereof, the inhabitants of the other parts of the county do not come into some of the magistrates of this county and surrender their arms, or other offensive weapons, concealed or otherwise, and give such proof of their return to allegiance as shall appear sufficient, an application will be made to Government to send the army at free quarters into such parishes as shall fail to comply, to enforce due obedience to this notice. “Signed by Edward Percival, sheriff, Courtown; John Henry Lyster, James Boyd, George Le Hunte, Thomas Handcock, John James, John Pounden, Hawtrey White, James White, Ebenezer Jacob, William Hore, Edward D’Arcy, John Heatly, John Grogan, Edward Turner, Isaac Cornie, Cornelius Grogan, Francis Turner, William Toole, Richard Newton King, Charles Vero ”

Terrified by the extreme cruelty with which those who were

treated with whom arms had been discovered, many of those who as yet possessed them hastened to give them up, hoping that being unarmed they might be left in peace. The Catholic clergy, too, advised their flocks to adopt this course, relying with groundless confidence on the promises of their faithless and merciless rulers. This error of judgment, however, they afterwards nobly redeemed, by fighting valiantly against their relentless foes. As might have been foreseen, this submission on the part of the people proved utterly unavailing to obtain any respite from persecution, and their sufferings, instead of being mitigated, increased day by day. Nothing was now heard in the country but the frightful screams of the tortured victims of the scourge or of the pitch-cap. But as man must ever cloak his guilt under some precious pretext, this was done, forsooth, to force the victim to confess crimes of which he was suspected of being guilty.

Despair took possession of the public mind, as the men under whose eyes, and by whose orders, such cruelties were practiced were the magistrates of the county, from whom there was no appeal. Amongst those bloodthirsty and inhuman wretches, to whose tender mercies the unfortunate peasantry were delivered up by the English Government, some may claim more especial attention. Hunter Gowan, Archibald, Hamilton, Jacob, and Owens, a Protestant minister, earned for themselves an infamous notoriety for the savage energy with which they used the power which the law had placed in their hands. Gowan entered the town of Gorey at the head of his troops, holding his sword aloft, with a human finger stuck on its point, and afterwards, adjourning to an inn to refresh himself after his labors, and to recount to his friends the infamous exploits of the day, stirred his punch with the bloody trophy. Of a character equally infamous was Jacob of Enniscorthy, who scoured the country, accompanied by a wretch as villainous as himself, who filled the double office of torturer and executioner. Besides those who underwent the various tortures in the power of such miscreants to inflict—and we have seen that their ingenuity was almost equal to their power, which was unbounded—numbers were sentenced to transportation, after a trial which was indeed a mockery of justice.

Mr. Hay states that for months previous to the insurrection, groups of from twelve to fifteen cartloads of persons condemned to transportation in other counties, passed daily

through the county of Wexford, on their way to Duncannon Fort. The Wexford magistrates soon began to put the precedent thus afforded in practice to a fearful extent. Many of the condemned appealed to the court of quarter sessions, held as described on the 23rd, but, as might have been expected, all the sentences passed by individual magistrates were confirmed by the twenty-three thereat assembled. Amongst the expatriated victims was a priest named Dixon, who was found guilty upon the evidence of an informer, although three respectable witnesses gave testimony—by swearing an alibi—sufficient to acquit him in any court of justice. During the week preceding the insurrection all manner of horrid rumors were rife in Wexford. As fourteen days were granted by the proclamation issued on the 23rd, for the submission of the people and the delivering up of their arms, it was hoped by many that a cessation of the persecution hitherto maintained might take place. But this hope was grievously disappointed. The various implements of torture were plied as vigorously as before; the brand of the legal incendiary still gave to the flames the once peaceful homes of the people, and the demons of cruelty and revenge alone rejoiced amidst the scene of universal horror and desolation.



## CHAPTER II.

### WHOLESALE MASSACRES—FATHER JOHN MURPHY—ON TO OULART HILL.

During the week preceding the insurrection two events occurred in Wicklow calculated to deepen, if possible, the feelings of horror which the state of affairs in their own county had already excited in the breasts of the Wexfordians. Hitherto individuals had suffered death or torture, but now it seemed wholesale massacres were determined upon. One of the events we allude to occurred at Dunlavin; the other, no less shocking in its detail, took place at Carnew, and is thus related in the "Irish Magazine," published in 1811, while the affair was still recent. "The armed loyalist yeomen of Coolatin and Carnew traversed the country threatening the inhabitants that unless they came into Carnew for protection they should all be put to death. The people, suspecting the real design, remained at home. However, thirty-six unfortunates went and on their arrival they were seized and thrust into prison, and, in the interim, another summons was despatched to the country people to come into Carnew. This second invitation they treated as the first. The loyalists then proceeded to sacrifice the wretched people who had placed themselves in their power. They tied the thirty-six couples, back to back, conveyed them to the ball-alley, placed them against the walls in pairs, and shot every one."

Men stood aghast on hearing of such a deed of wholesale slaughter. It now seemed plain that no man, however innocent, could deem himself safe; to be a "Papist," or even a liberal Protestant, was a crime that sufficed to bring down destruction on his head. Brave men might think of resistance, but unarmed and unorganized as they were, what could it avail but to render their ruin more complete? In this dreadful crisis, however, a man was found fearless enough, in the midst of an oppressed and dismayed people, to raise the standard of revolt, and bid a brave defiance to the tyrants of his country.

This man had been known hitherto only as a kind, zealous, and a true Irish priest, who, though he had won the

highest honours of scholarship in a foreign university, yet had ever lived among his humble flock as one of themselves. A gentleman by profession and education, and by acquired accomplishments and natural gifts, fitted to move in the highest circles, he preferred to be the poor man's friend than the rich man's flatterer. He, like others of his sacred calling, had believed in the faith of the faithless, and had counselled his flock to deliver up their arms at the mandate of their rulers.

He now saw with bitter disappointment that the submission had been of no avail, that mercy was shown to none, not even to the old and helpless, nor even those whose sex should have been a sufficient defense.

From the surrounding parishes reports came of fearful outrages daily committed, and at length the storm burst forth in full violence within the district whose inhabitants called him pastor. On the 26th of May twenty houses were set on fire in the parish of Boolevogue. The church soon after shared the same fate, and soon the humble temple wherein a virtuous people had often gathered together to worship God in the religion of their fathers, was reduced to a mass of smoking ruins, and the zealous priest, who had prayed and preached therein, found himself, without home or altar, a homeless and hunted fugitive.

The often repeated, and, I believe, commonly received statement that the burning of Father John's house and chapel was what impelled him to take part in the insurrection, is quite unfounded. Like the majority of the Catholic clergy of the time, he had no house that he could call his own, but lodged in that of a parishoner, and the Chapel of Boolevogue was not burned till the morning of Sunday, the 27th of May, when the insurgents had already begun by the fight at the Harrow. Father John had, indeed, opposed the organization of the United Irishmen, not, as may be supposed, from any lack of patriotism, but because he deemed it unlawful, as unable to effect what it aimed at, while he trusted that in time the English Government might adopt a policy more just and more merciful towards his unfortunate country.

In this expectation he was, as we have seen, disappointed, for matters assumed, day by day, a gloomier aspect, till the good priest and true patriot perceived at length that oppression had risen to a height that justified, because it



necessitated, resistance. The step he designed to take was, perhaps, hastened by the following event:

Saturday, the 26th of May, was the day appointed for the peasantry of Boolevogue and its neighborhood to deliver up their arms to a magistrate named Cornick, who was to meet them at Ferns. On arriving at that place, according to appointment, they did not, as they expected, meet Cornick, but were fiercely assailed by a large number of the "black mob," as the Orange yeomen of that period were called by the peasantry. Their enemies, who outnumbered them by two to one, were all provided with swords and muskets, which they used with fatal effect. Overpowered by numbers, but still fighting bravely, the peasantry retreated towards home, turning now and then as their enemies pressed them too closely. On arriving at Milltown, they were met by Father John, who had ridden up on hearing of the affray. On seeing the arrival of the priest, the Orangemen, ceasing the pursuit, came to a halt, and presently afterwards returned to Ferns. It was this desperate and unprovoked attack, together with the burning of the houses in his parish, that decided the hitherto wavering mind of Father Murphy.

Father John luckily happened to be absent when the houses above mentioned were given to the flames, but he beheld the conflagration from a distance, and sought refuge in a neighboring thicket. To this place of refuge, also, came many of his people involved in the same calamity. Here, surrounded by a crowd of weeping women and children, and of men, who trembled not for themselves, but for their helpless wives, mothers, and sisters, and their more helpless little ones, the great-souled Soggarth thought more of their sorrow than his own, and now deeply deplored his infatuation in counselling the people to deliver up their arms, and thereby leaving themselves at the mercy of foes whose hatred could be content only with their utter destruction. He now resolved to retrieve, if possible, this error of judgment.

Hitherto he had been their leader in peace, now they should follow him in the struggle for freedom. The contest was, indeed, unequal; but as his eye rested upon the stalwart forms of those sturdy men who stood before him in dejected attitudes, his spirit aroused itself from the torpor almost of despair into which it had sunk, and formed a brave resolve to change them into soldiers of freedom. His resolution taken, Father John motioned to the people to gather more closely,

around him, and began, in a direct and homely style, to speak of the deep sympathy he felt for them in their present affliction, which, he might truly say, grieved him more than his own mischance. He confessed his mistake in the matter of the arms, and finally declared that the time was come for resistance, and that he himself would lead to the field those of his parishioners who were willing to follow him, for he deemed it better to die like men with arms in their hands, than wait to be butchered like dogs in the ditches.

Self-sufficient ignorance may presume to censure the counsel given by this good priest to his people, but there are times when resistance to tyranny becomes, if not a duty, at least a thing just and lawful, and who but the falsest, vilest, or most ignorant can deny that it was thus in the case of men who took up arms to defend life itself, and what true men value more than their own, the lives of those who are dear to them? There are histories of this period written by men in the service of the English Government, in which the acts and motives of the insurgent peasantry and of their leaders are foully misrepresented. The authors of such pretended histories basely calumniate the brave men who made so grand a struggle against their far too numerous and too powerful foes. They are not ashamed to call them "deluded wretches," and to stigmatize their high-souled leader as a "ferocious bigot who delighted in blood."

Alas, Ireland has been sadly prolific of such vipers as those so-called historians—men who, living on property wrested by iniquitous laws from the people, habitually utter the vilest calumnies against the truest and least of her sons.

The men they calumniate might have been uneducated, but was it their own fault or that of the ruler who banned the schoolmaster and set a price on his head? They had their faults, no doubt, but in all the qualities that make men estimable they were far superior to their calumniators. They were honest men who lived by honest labor, not on the wages of dishonor; they were not descendants of Cromwell's blood-stained hypocrites, robbers and regicides, with, perchance, a title of honor that but made their native meanness more conspicuous by the contrast, but were the sons of honest men with humble but stainless names—names which this history intends to prove they sullied by no craven or unworthy act.

When Father John had concluded his brief speech, an exulting cheer burst forth from all the men of his audience,

and they forthwith declared their willingness to follow him through every danger. Well might those bold peasants accept with joy their proffered leader, for he had been cast by nature in the mould of those who lead men to victory.

Father John was rather under than over the ordinary stature of his countrymen, but broad-chested and strong-limbed, of remarkable activity as well as strength. His complexion was florid, his features rather handsome, but their beauty lay more in the expression than in the shape. His white forehead rose over bright blue eyes, which, though they usually beamed with a cheerful smile, could at times flash forth a glance that indicated the fiery and intrepid soul which in a just cause defies danger, and boldly confronts death itself. To personal advantages he united a most determined spirit and a power, invaluable in a leader, of inspiring confidence in his followers.

Had he received the advantages of a military education he might have successfully aspired to the highest honors offered by the career of arms, but he has obtained for himself a higher and a prouder name than any of the epauletted tools of tyrants; for the soldier who falls in the cause of an oppressed people builds for himself a monument of fame that outlives that of granite or marble.

Father John, thus chosen by acclamation the first captain of the insurgents, determined to commence his new career by a daring deed that would strike terror into the hearts of tyrants. He proposed that an attack should be made on the Camolin yeomen cavalry as they returned that night from one of their daily forays on the defenseless people, to Camolin Park, the residence of their colonel, Lord Mountnorris. The people were to disperse, provide themselves with whatever arms they could procure, and return, when night had fallen, to the appointed place.

In pursuance of this plan, Father John and his brave men met as soon as darkness had set in at the appointed place, and having thrown a barricade across the road by which the cavalry were to return on their homeward way, they concealed themselves behind the ditches on either side of the way. They had not been long in their place of concealment when they heard the welcome sounds of horses' feet breaking in upon the silence of the night, and in a brief while their ruthless persecutors came in full view, discussing in loud tones their achievements during the day, and gloating over

the horrible details of acts of demon-like wickedness, little dreaming that their last foray had been ridden, and that their avengers were so close at hand.

Riding thus leisurely along they arrived at length within sight of the barricade—halted at a short distance from it while one approached to ascertain its nature. Then a wild yell rising from behind the ditches told them of the presence of those they had good reason to fear as their deadliest foes. But they had little time for reflection, and but little for action. They had time only to fire one hasty and ill-aimed volley from their pistols when the foe was in their midst.

The contest was brief—the pitch-fork with its sharpened prongs wielded by vigorous arms, and the deadlier scythe were more than a match for the sabre. After a fight that lasted but a few minutes, every saddle was empty of its yeoman rider, and of those who had ridden forth in the morning on their cruel errand of bloodshed and plunder, the greater number now lay upon the highway bleeding and disfigured corpses. The horses and accoutrements of the fallen yeomen became now the spoil of the jovious victors, who, elated with this first and decisive success, determined to march to Camolin Park and take possession of the arms therein stored, which had been given up by the surrounding peasantry. In this enterprise they were also completely successful, capturing, in addition to what they had expected, a number of carbines provided by Lord Mountnorris for the arming of the new corps he had organized. Well was it for the noble colonel that he had not ridden out with his corps on this fatal day.

Although this successful effort on the part of the insurgents had taken place during the night, the tidings of it had before midnight been heard with joy in many a distant cottage and farmhouse, and before morning dawned the victorious band was augmented by many a brave recruit, prepared to brave all dangers fighting for the good old cause. Leaving Father John and his men to rejoice in their first victory, and to plan others, we will take a view of the state of the country, and briefly account minor events that occurred during the night of the 23rd. and on the ensuing day.

The tidings of the successful surprise and defeat of the Camolin cavalry spread with great rapidity throughout the country. Turner, a magistrate, who escaped with difficulty from the pursuit of his long-hunted foes, at last turned to



bay, brought the startling news to Wexford early on Sunday morning.

The North Cork, then stationed in the barracks, to the number of 100 men, and the Shilmalier yeomen cavalry immediately got under arms, and were soon on their march towards Oulart Hill, whereon it was said that their peasant foe intended to take up their position.

The yeomany and militia who quitted Wexford on this expedition marched by different routes—the former taking the road that runs through the village of Castlebridge, and the latter choosing that by the seaside. They met by agreement at Ballyfarnock, and proceeding together as far as Ballinamonabeg, they halted with the intention of quenching their thirst and laying in a stock of “Dutch courage” at a public house there belonging to a man named Kavanagh. Not finding the owner at home, they proceeded to indulge in copious libations, and when they had drunk what they considered enough, under the circumstances, these loyal defenders of the country and sustainers of the tottering constitution, by way of payment, set fire to the house they had plundered. Thus, not content with robbing the unfortunate proprietor, they satisfied their brutal instinct of destruction by burning his house.

This is but an illustration of the infamous treatment the unfortunate people were forced to endure at the hands of those whom frequent acts of injustice and cruelty seemed to have transformed into demons. The leader of these wretches, bear in mind, gentle reader, was a magistrate, armed with the power of life and death. The news of the defeat of the Camolin cavalry reached Gorey long before dawn, and the militia quartered there, apprehending the victors might direct their march thither, were seized with terror, and forthwith fled from the town. They, however, returned soon after on hearing they had gone in the direction of Oulart, and as cowards are ever cruel, they showed their satisfaction at this intelligence by torturing the prisoners they had taken.

A young man named Jeremiah Donovan, disguised as a groom, bearing fictitious letters, directed to Lord Mountnorris, brought the news of the defeat of the yeomen at the Harrow to Castlebridge, whence it spread rapidly over the entire country. Next day he returned in time to take part in the fight on Oulart, where he fell—the only man killed on the insurgent side.



If the tidings of the successful result of the first encounter between the insurgents and their enemies served to raise the hope of the peasantry, it filled the various corps of yeomanry with a determination to take the direst vengeance—not that these cravens desired to meet in fair fight the half-armed peasantry, for they had it in their power to take a safer if less soldier-like revenge.

The aged parents, the helpless wives and children of their feared and hated foes were in their power, and on these poor victims they would wreak their vengeance. Filled with this fell purpose, they sallied forth from their various stations and commenced putting to death all persons they encountered on their way, and those were chiefly the feeble and unarmed, for the young and strong shunned the highway. They set fire to the houses of those they designated as “rebels, Papists, disaffected croggies,” and in many instances the unfortunate inmates were consumed in the flames amidst the exulting yells of their destroyers. An historian of the period himself a witness, affirms that on a march of some seven miles one corps alone set fire to one hundred houses!

Such achievements as this—the burning of the old and helpless, and the innocent in their houses—the Orange historians of the time mentioned in terms of mild deprecation, while they pour out the vials of their most wrathful denunciation upon the heads of the hunted peasantry, because they dared to retaliate upon such ruthless enemies. Meantime Father John's force, considerably augmented, amounting to about 3,000 men, badly armed, indeed, but filled with a determination to conquer or die, set out about mid-day on Sunday, the 27th, for the hill of Oularth, where they arrived about noon. This course their leader chose, to give the people of the neighboring parishes an opportunity of joining his standard.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE VICTORIOUS BATTLE OF OULART HILL—FATHER MICHAEL MURPHY JOINS THE INSURGENTS—DEFEAT OF THE MEATH MILITIA.

During the night of the 26th, a number of peasants assembled on the hill of Kilmacthomas, an eminence about nine miles to the west of Gorey. This multitude was largely composed of women and children, and had assembled, as it seemed, more in the hope of escaping the fury of the yeomanry or militia than with a determination to fight. While on his way to celebrate mass (it being Sunday morning) Father Michael Murphy was encountered by some of these people who besought him to accompany them to the hill. He had from the outset been strongly opposed to armed resistance, considering it hopeless, and therefore unlawful; but, at the same time, he declared, that if it were attempted, "he would go with the people." In the fulfillment of this promise he proceeded to Kilmacthomas. Against the unorganized crowd assembled on the eminence in question, two hundred yeomen marched out from Carnew, and advancing boldly—probably encouraged by the presence of the women and children—came within musket range, and poured volley after volley into the unresisting crowd, who soon fled in wild terror, while their foes pursued and succeeded in slaughtering about three hundred of their number. The Rev. Mr. Gordon states that after this massacre the yeomen in a march of seven miles burned a hundred cabins, and two Roman Catholic chapels. We turn with pleasure from this slaughter of helpless women and children to follow the fortunes of the brave peasants camped on Oulart Hill.

About three thousand people accompanied Father John to the hill at Oulart, but of that large number there were not more than three hundred fighting men. The rest of the multitude consisted of women, children, old, infirm men, and unarmed striplings. Across the brow of the hill where it looks to the old village of Oulart, about a mile distant, there extends a breast-high ditch, forming a dividing line between two of the numerous small fields into which the cultivated surface of its rounded summit is divided. Behind this con-

venient breastwork Father Murphy stationed all the best armed men of his force. Of this small force the majority had pikes, but others were furnished with no more efficient arms than scythes and pitchforks. At some distance in the rear of this body he placed the women and children, with the old men and boys, whose too advanced or unripe age unfitted them for the approaching contest. Among these, however, there were many who afterwards did good service. The insurgent force thus disposed remained upon the hill-top, awaiting in anxious expectation the approach of their enemies from the direction of Wexford. It was the Sabbath day, and the summer sun had attained its meridian height, and was already verging towards the west, when the anxious watchers on Oulart Hill beheld a long line of red-coated men advancing towards them along the road that leads from Wexford, and crossing the summit of a swell of ground called the hill of Bolubwee (thus pronounced). They halted on coming within a short distance of the base of Oulart. These men were the North Cork Infantry, who had marched out of Wexford at an early hour that morning. From their elevated position the insurgents could plainly discern all the movements of the hostile body. The Shilmaher cavalry, under Colonel Le Hunte, who accompanied the militia, were first seen to get in motion, extending their force so as to enclose the hill, evidently with the design of depriving their enemies of all chance of escape or retreat in case of their defeat by the militia.

The latter deploying into line began to advance at a quick pace up the ascent from the southern side. The peasantry awaited their approach in silence, permitting them to come within musket shot of their earthen bulwark. Major Lombard, the second in command, rode somewhat in advance of his men, and not seeing, as he drew near the ditch, anything to denote the presence of the enemy, he concluded that they had fled; under this impression he spurred his steed forward, waving his sword aloft, and calling loudly to his men to follow, exclaiming that "the course was clear."

The words of ill-timed exultation had scarce passed his lips when a bullet from the musket of one of the watchful insurgents pierced his breast. He instantly fell from his horse, and lay dead upon the field. On beholding the officer fall, the militia raised a shout of rage, and pressed forward at a quickened pace to avenge his death. While the military were thus advancing, one of the insurgents suggested to his

comrades that it would be well to raise their hats placed on the points of their pikes, over the top of the ditch, as thereby they might draw a volley from the advancing militia. This suggestion was instantly adopted, and had the desired effect. The militia, beholding, as they thought, the heads of their opponents elevated above the ditch, emptied their muskets with a hasty volley, which, of course, proved quite harmless.

Having halted to deliver this volley, the soldiery again advanced at a less hurried pace, loading their muskets the while. But twelve of the insurgents were armed with guns. Six of these now rose, and resting the barrels of their muskets upon the ditch, delivered their fire with deadly accuracy upon their assailants. Six of the militia fell, and their comrades in dismay and confusion returned the fire with another hasty and ineffectual volley. Again six of the insurgents rose and poured in another fatal volley. This second volley deprived the unfortunate red-coats of whatever little courage the first had left them, and being now charged by the pikemen, they did not withstand for five minutes' space their furious and determined onset. Disorganized and terror-stricken, they soon broke their ranks, and fled down the slope of the hill by the way they had advanced. But they had small chance of escape from the swif-footed peasantry, who, nimble as deer, pressed upon their footsteps. Their destruction, strange to say, was rendered more complete by the presence of the mounted yeomen, for a panic had seized the crowd in the rear of the defenders of the ditch on their approach, and they had actually begun their flight down the northern side of the hill, when perceiving the mounted yeomen they retraced their steps, returning just in time to join in the pursuit. Many of the routed soldiery were piked before they could gain the foot of the hill; some, when hard pressed, turned to resist; others threw down their arms and begged, but in vain, for mercy. Some of the more agile of the fugitives reached the fields that stretch between the fatal hill and Bolubwee, but all of the rank and file perished in the pursuit. The last was slain at a distance of about a mile from the hill. Lieutenant Colonel Foote fled in time, and, mounted on a good horse, reached Wexford in safety. Upwards of one hundred of the common men fell in this action.

Six officers were killed, viz : Major Lombard (already mentioned), the Honorable Captain De Courcey (a brother of the then Lord Kinsale), three Lieutenants—Williams,



Ware, and Barry, and Ensign Keogh. Concerning this engagement, the Rev. Mr. Gordon observes:

"About 300 of the insurgents, rallied by their sacerdotal commander, made so furious, close, and sudden an onset with their pikes, that, with the loss of only three killed and six wounded, they slew the whole detachment, except the lieutenant-colonel, a sergeant, and three privates."

Meantime the mounted yeoman remained passive spectators of the conflict, and saw with the utmost surprise and dismay the sudden and total defeat of their comrades. Their sympathy with their unfortunate allies was, however, soon changed into fear for their own safety, for one of their foes on the hill, armed with a long-shore gun, brought down one of their own body with a fatal aim. On seeing their comrade fall from his horse dead upon the field, they put spurs to their horses, and galloped off with all speed in the direction of Wexford. All the militia men were not slain on the hill, but many of them, flying in terror from the fatal hill, and seeking to escape from the adjoining fields, were pursued, overtaken, and slain.

The fugitive yeomen, when out of sight, and safe from the pursuit of the now terrible pikemen, took a dastardly revenge, by slaughtering all the "croppies" they encountered, and setting fire to many houses. While these cowards are making their way towards Wexford, murdering as they go, the victorious insurgents, under their indomitable leader, not being able, for want of cavalry, to pursue their flying enemies, set forth for the hill of Carrigrew, on which they encamped for the night. Next morning at an early hour they marched in sort of military order to Camolin, where they were to find some arms that had lately been deposited there for the use of the yeomen. From Camolin they continued their march to Ferns, and they learned that the royal troops had retreated to Gorey and Enniscorthy. Father John now led on his gallant little band towards the latter town, taking a circuitous route thither by the bridge of Scarawalsh, in order that the people of that district might have an opportunity of joining the forces. The glad tidings of these successes had spread rapidly over the county, and numbers of gallant young peasants, for the most part of the better class, came flocking to join the victors, prepared to fight to the death under such a brave and successful leader. The small force with which Father John had so boldly begun the insurrection being by







FENNISCORTHY—VINEGAR HILL IN THE DISTANCE.

this time augmented to some 5,000 men, about five hundred of whom carried fire-arms, chiefly long fowling-pieces, it was thought expedient to hold a council of war to deliberate on their further proceedings. At this council it was decided to march without delay to attack Enniscorthy. On their way to that town they came to a halt on the hill of Balliorrell, both to rest after their long march and to deliberate concerning the intended attack. While they were halted on Balliorrell, they were joined by Rev. Michael Murphy, at the head of some young men of his parish of Ballyearnew, full of ardor for fight, but, like their comrades, ill-armed.

The plan of the intended attack on Enniscorthy being finally arranged, the insurgents descended the hill, and advanced towards the town. Two hundred men, armed with firearms preceded the main body, which consisted chiefly of pikemen, on whose flanks and in whose rear some marksmen were placed. Moving onward in this order, they soon came in sight of the enemy, whose force consisted of several corps of yeomanry, mounted and on foot, and a body of the North Cork Militia amounting to about 500 men. This disciplined and well-armed force was strongly aided in the engagement that ensued by the loyalists of the town, who now took their stand on the nearest part of the town wall, or remained more safely entrenched within their houses, prepared to assist as much as they could the King's troops against their common enemy. Besides these loyalist Orangemen, many "respectable Catholics" had offered their services, begging to be supplied with arms, that they evince their loyalty by firing upon their countrymen and co-religionists, but, being regarded as untrustworthy in this crisis, they were refused and harshly threatened for their temerity in daring to proffer their despised aid.

The advance guard of the insurgent army now had advanced to within musket shot of the Duffery gate, the principal entrance to the town. In front of the entrance several corps of yeomanry were drawn up. Their left flank was protected against attack by the river Slaney, which runs through the town, and their right flank and rear by the strong walls of the town, and the houses that overtopped it, garrisoned with armed loyalist citizens. They were thus secure on either flank and in rear. Captain Snowe, with his company of North Cork, was stationed at the bridge, to secure the retreat of his comrades, in case they suffered a defeat. The road by which

the assailants advanced to the attack was one of the three leading to the Duffery gate, and on their advance being perceived by its defenders, they were charged with great fury by the cavalry. When the insurgents beheld their enemy approaching swiftly towards them they quitted the road, and posted themselves behind the ditches that bounded it on either side, and, resting their guns on them, poured upon their advancing foes a deliberate and deadly fire, which cooled their ardor, and made them retreat more quickly than they advanced. However, on being reinforced, they again advanced, but with no better success, being forced to fly before the fire of the deliberate gunsmen.

While the gunsmen thus keep their mounted enemies at bay and exchange a distant and scattered fire with the hostile infantry stationed at the Duffery gate, and the townspeople on the walls and in the houses, the main body of the insurgents, being come to a halt at a short distance from the town, hold a brief consultation as to the best mode of attacking troops so well armed and so advantageously posted as their enemies.

Father John, who on every occasion evinced a military genius, suggested that the best plan, and that most likely to be attended with success, was to drive a number of cattle, that were herded in the rear of the column, to the front, and thence to goad them onward towards their enemy's ranks by a chosen body of pikemen, and that they might themselves safely follow in the rear of the maddened herd.

This stratagem was tried, and proved completely successful. The cattle used for this purpose—the youngest and wildest of the herd—were driven quickly to the front, and thence onward towards the gate.

They no sooner heard the wild shouts of those who drove them than they set forward at a rapid pace in the required direction, the agile pikemen following closely upon their heels, and thus approaching unharmed the line of their armed foes. The latter, perceiving the wild herd advancing furiously upon them, and hearing from the rear, above the bellowing of the maddened beasts, the louder and fiercer shouts of their dreaded foes, endeavored with all their might to check the cattle in their furious advance. To effect this some of the soldiery rushed forward to drive them back with the bayonet, while others fired their muskets into the midst of the herd. But all their efforts were unavailing to arrest that

furious onset, for the cattle, goaded to madness by the yells of the men in the rear, and, when they attempted to turn back or slacken their speed, feeling the sharp points of the pikes, charged furiously forward into the ranks of the dismayed soldiery, and opened the way for a yet more dreaded foe—for with a wild cheer or revenge and hatred, the pikemen were amongst them. Not a moment's stand did they make against the peasants whose destruction they had but lately sworn to accomplish. The remembrance of the fearful wrongs they had endured—their burned homesteads—their tortured or murdered friends—nerved the peasant's arm, and brightened the courage of his brave heart. Success, too, had given him confidence in himself, and days of hard fighting had given him something of the soldier's heedlessness of life.

The King's troops, completely routed, fled with the utmost precipitation into the town, with their victorious foes at their heels in close pursuit. The impetuous advance of the insurgents was, however, checked by a most destructive fire directed against them from those houses near the gate, whose doors opened to receive and shelter their routed foe. Those of the late defenders of the Duffery gate who succeeded in escaping the fury of the insurgent assault having now joined their adherents already posted within the houses—both united, poured a terrible fire on the unsheltered assailants. However, the undaunted peasantry sustained this terrible fusillade with the resolution of veteran soldiers, and straightaway proceeded to force an entrance into those houses that proved so advantageous to their enemies, and so destructive to themselves. This combination of valor and stubborn perseverance finally won the day. Consternation seized the foe on seeing such a display of heroic resolution in those frieze-coated men on whom they had so long trampled with impunity. Alas! they, too, were Irishmen, and in a good cause might have fought valiantly, but having chosen to become the hired cut-throats of a foreign Government, and employed to butcher their fellow-countrymen, they lacked that generous determination to conquer or die that men who fight in a good cause alone can feel. At length the sight of the suburbs in a blaze (set on fire by the patriotic inmates), together with that of a multitude suddenly appearing on the summit of Vinegar Hill, completely disheartened the loyalists.

Thomas Sinnott, of Kilbride, contributed much to the insurgent success by leading a large body across the Slaney,



about a mile above Enniscorthy, and unexpectedly pouring into the town from the northern direction. Assailed thus on all sides the dispirited loyalists gave way. Orders were suddenly given to sound a retreat, and in short time the garrison of the town, with their families, and a large number of their civilian adherents were on their way to Wexford. A panic-stricken and disordered crowd they were—soldiers and civilians, women and children, forgetting every distinction of rank in their terrified eagerness to escape. Mr. Hay thus describes the confusion of their flight.

“Officers had been induced to tear off their epaulets and every other mark that could distinguish them from the privates, considering themselves in more danger if they were recognized as officers. However, not being attacked, there was sufficient leisure to escort those that accompanied them, and who were in such a piteous plight as to excite on their arrival the hearty commiseration of all of the inhabitants of Wexford, who invited them indiscriminately to their houses, and supplied them with every comfort necessary in their power—and of which they stood in so much need. . . . Some had their clothes scorched about them, others wanted their shoes and other parts of their dress which had been lost or torn off; besides, the great heat of the day made it doubly distressing to delicate females—many of whom had the additional charge of the burden and care of their children.”

While the retreat was being sounded a party of Orangemen approached the castle with the fell intent of putting all the “Papists” therein confined to death, and thus avenging in some degree their defeat. But, fortunately for those whose lives they had determined to take, the keeper of the prison had already fled, taking the key with him, and as the intended murderers had not sufficient time to force the strong door of the prison, they were forced to depart, their cruel intent unfulfilled. So utter was the disorganization of the routed loyalists that had they been pursued by their victorious enemies they must all have been slain or taken prisoners; but the pikemen, who on that day had marched thirty miles, and fought, as we have seen, for several hours afterwards without partaking of any food whatever, were far too weary to pursue fresh men, who fled as those only can fly who fear that death pursues. The insurgents used their victory with a moderation that adorned their valor, for no house was set on fire and no person maltreated or put to death—and this al-

though many of the townspeople had taken an active part against them.

And yet these men have been branded as cruel and ferocious because isolated deeds of revenge were perpetrated by individuals amongst them.

I defy the base defamers of a race who are generous and forgiving almost to a fault, to substantiate the charges of cruelty and ferocity they have so unscrupulously made against the insurgents in the brief and disastrous but heroic struggle of the Irish of one county against all the military resources of England!

In this action the English lost upwards of one hundred men of the rank and file and three officers, amongst the latter Captain Pounden, of the Enniscorthy Infantry, who fell at the Duffery Gate.

The insurgents, now masters of Enniscorthy, having possessed themselves of whatever arms and ammunition they found therein, deemed it prudent to quit the town, and encamp on the rocky eminence called Vinegar Hill, that overlooks and stands like a huge sentinel to guard it.

While the insurgent army were encamped on and around Vinegar Hill, their number was hourly augmented by fresh arrivals, for the news of their success had spread far and wide during the night.

Amongst the brave men who thus came to share the danger and glory of the contest were some whose position and education caused the insurgents to hail their arrival with joy. Garret Byrne, of Ballymanus; Thomas Clooney, of Moneyhore; and Barker, of Enniscorthy, arrived at the camp during the day to aid to the best of their power, their countrymen in the struggle for freedom. Vinegar Hill was now the center towards which the insurgents from the surrounding districts came flocking, and there were gathered the materials of as brave an army as ever bore arms in the cause of an oppressed country. They needed but unity of council and competent leaders to crown their cause with the most glorious success. Unity, however, was wanting, for every leader held his own view as to what course they should pursue, and the insurrection had nearly come to a premature end when a fortunate incident occurred, which fixed their wavering thoughts and made them resolve to march on Wexford.

This was the arrival of a deputation from the Wexford loyalists summoning them to surrender and disperse. The

arrival of the liberated prisoners was hailed with the greatest enthusiasm by the people still remaining, and the joyful and surprising event, in a brief while spreading far and wide, had the effect of recalling to the scene those who were already quitting it. When the gentlemen of the deputation informed their excited audience that they had been sent by the loyalists to dissuade them from advancing upon Wexford, the multitude burst forth into loud shouts of exultation, justly regarding the embassy in its true light as an evidence of the weakness of their enemy and of their own strength which they themselves had not fully estimated. It inspired them with a confidence in themselves and their cause that hitherto they had somewhat lacked. Unable to agree before, they now demanded with unanimous voice to be led without delay against the town.

Mr. Colclough was immediately sent back (Mr. Fitzgerald being detained) to announce their determination. That very evening the insurgents set out for Wexford and encamped for the night on the "Three Rocks," a ridge of the Forth Mountains, so called, which are situated about three miles from the town.

Upon these barren and lofty hills the insurgents pitched their camp and having posted sentinels, retired to rest for the night, which was of unusual darkness. Early the next morning the watchful sentinels aroused their slumbering comrades with intelligence that they had descried a large force of royal troops on the march, from the direction of Duncannon, towards Wexford. On the receipt of these tidings a body of men was despatched, under the command of Clooney, and Kelley, of Killan, to intercept and give battle to the advancing force. Well did these brave men execute their orders. Having descended the hill, they sought a convenient ambush at its foot, and there awaited the approach of the loyalist force, who continued to advance in fancied security till the insurgents, starting from their place of ambush, attacked them at once both in front and rear. The struggle was brief and soon decided. In this, as in subsequent engagements, the soldiery proved no match for their peasant foe, whose strength and activity set at naught the resistance of England's trained hirelings.

After a fight of about ten minutes' duration, the entire detachment, amounting to about one hundred men and three

officers of the Meath Militia, were either slain or made prisoners, and two pieces of cannon became the prize of the victors. The main body, of which the detachment thus signally defeated formed the advanced guard, had advanced from Duncannon Fort as far as Taghmon on their way to Wexford, but on hearing of this defeat, General Fawcett, their commander, gave orders to retreat with all speed whence they had come.

The following is the official account of the affair:

DUBLIN CASTLE, June 2, 1798.

"Accounts have been received from Major-General Eustace at New Ross, stating that Major-General Fawcett having marched with a company of the Meath Regiment from Duncannon Fort, this small force was surrounded by a very large body between Taghmon and Wexford, and defeated. General Fawcett effected his retreat to Duncannon Fort."

We now leave the valiant and victorious insurgents to enjoy their latest triumph, in order to recount as briefly as we may the chief events that took place within the county town since the battle of Oulart.



Composed from Book of Kells.





## CHAPTER IV.

### ORANGEISM IN WEXFORD—COUNCILS OF WAR—DISHONEST STRATAGEM OF THE LOYALISTS.

When the tidings of the destruction of the North Cork reached Wexford, the loyalists there were filled with the greatest consternation. The comrades of the slain men, vowing to avenge or perish with them, hurriedly assumed their arms and set out for Oulart. However, on arriving at the bridge they were met by a number of the loyalists townsmen, who succeeded in persuading them to defer for the present the execution of their purpose, and return to their barracks.

The widows and orphans of the fallen soldiers ran through the streets loudly bewailing the loss of their husbands and fathers, and mingling with their lamentations the bitterest execrations of the yeomanry, to whose cowardly conduct they attributed their destruction.

The militia, not finding any other means of gratifying their vengeance, determined to put to death the prisoners in the town jail, singling out in particular Messrs. Harvey, Colclough and Fitzgerald. But the governor of the jail, Joseph Gladwin, resolved to protect his charge against the violence of these desperate men. Having contrived to get the military outside the prison, he locked the door, and proceeded to warn the prisoners of their danger, furnishing the three gentlemen with weapons, that in case the militia succeeded in obtaining an entrance they might not perish without a struggle. The enraged militia, thirsting for blood, soon after arrived at the gates, and loudly demanded entrance. This being refused, they essayed to burst in the door, but its great strength defied all their efforts. At length, unable by force or stratagem to affect an entrance, these baffled banditti departed and returned to their quarters.

But yet greater reverses than any which had hitherto befallen them awaited the loyalists at Wexford. Next day they heard that the victors at Oulart had attacked Enniscorthy, and, from the dense clouds of smoke that could be discerned hanging over that town they concluded that it had been set on fire, and their terrified imagination added horrors to the catastrophe they had divined. The arrival of the fugitives

from the most miserable plight imaginable, and the exaggerated accounts they gave of what they had witnessed and what they believed had taken place after their departure, inspired their woe-begone brethren of Wexford with the utmost dread.

The town of Wexford was at this period a hot-bed of Orangeism, and the members of that baneful organization, upheld and fostered by English influence, had hitherto been absolute masters of the lives and properties of their Catholic fellow-townsmen. They had ruled in the fiercest spirit of hatred, the unfortunate possessors of a creed banned by the laws of England, and evinced to the utmost the detestation they bore to any Protestant who discountenanced their villainous tyranny. They now beheld with terror the long down-trodden helot rising up in the energy of his manhood and threatening to shake off the galling yoke he had so long borne, not, indeed, with patience, but with the hapless resignation of despair. In their days of power they had shown no mercy, and they now believed that if they fell into the hands of their enemy they might expect none. To secure themselves against such a calamity they resolved to use every possible precaution.

The ancient town of Wexford now bristled with warlike preparation. Every avenue was strongly barricaded, and cannon were planted in the most advantageous positions. The loyalist inhabitants, including most of the wealthier class, came forward in this emergency to proffer their aid in the defense. Two hundred of their number were furnished with weapons and employed in guarding the walls (at the time entire), conforming in every respect to military discipline. Messrs Harvey and Colelough, though still detained in prison, began to be treated with some consideration, being regarded in the light of valuable hostages. A numerous deputation of magistrates and military officers waited upon them in their place of duance, and besought them to exert their influence with their tenantry in the baronies of Forth and Bargo, to deter them from taking part in the insurrection. With this request the imprisoned gentlemen complied—in truth they had no option, being quite at the mercy of their enemies. The loyalists of Wexford, deeming that town would be selected by the insurgents as the next object of attack, despatched messengers to obtain reinforcements from the nearest garrisons, all the while prosecuting with the utmost vigor their defensive

preparations. At an early hour on the 29th of May, the first of the expected reinforcements arrived. It consisted of two hundred of the Donegal Militia, under Colonel Maxwell, accompanied by the Heathfield Yeomen Cavalry, commanded by Captain John Grogan. With these came several officers of the 13th Regiment of the Meath Militia, who announced the approach of that force under General Fawcett. At a late hour the Taghmon Cavalry, under Captain Cox, rode into town. Notwithstanding the vigorous preparations they had made, and the presence of such a large number of armed defenders, the loyal burghers of Wexford could not shake off the terror that had seized them when the idea of an insurgent attack upon the town had first entered their minds. Nothing could exceed the terror now displayed by the Orangemen, arising, as it may naturally be supposed, from the consciousness of the outrages they committed, of the houses they had burned, of the innocent people they had tortured and put to death. Filled with the utmost direful apprehensions, many of them hastened to take refuge on board the ships that had moored within the harbor, intending to sail for England in case the insurgents became masters of the town. Others shut themselves up in their houses and awaited in anxious suspense the further course of events. In addition to the precautions already adopted for the security of the place, an order was issued commanding that all fires should be extinguished, even those used for baking purposes, and that all thatched houses should be stripped of their covering. Scouts were despatched to explore the country in all directions, and to bring in whatever intelligence they could gather of the enemy's movements. To add to the feelings of depression that weighed so heavily on the inhabitants, the bodies of the officers who had been slain at Oulart were brought into town in mournful procession—the first victims to hostile rage seen in Wexford on the loyalist side since the contest between the people and their rulers was entered upon.

Mr. Hay, being thought a favorite amongst the insurgents, though a loyalist, was now appealed to, and entreated to use his influence with the latter, and, if possible, to induce them to disperse. He himself gives the following account of the transaction, which exhibits a strange mixture on the part of the Orangemen of dread of the insurgents and distrust of

the "Papists," of the most overweening arrogance and most arant cowardice curiously combined. He says:

"No magistrate being found, as I suppose, that would venture on this dangerous service, it was then inquired whether the liberation of Messrs Harvey, Fitzgerald and Colclough might not appease the people. On this question I declared myself incompetent to decide. I was then asked whether, if enlarged on bail, they would undertake to go out to the insurgents and endeavor to prevail on them to disperse. To this inquiry my answer was, that as the lives of these gentlemen were in danger from the fury of the soldiery, while they continued in prison, I thought they would comply with this request. The matter now became public, and the prisoners were accordingly visited by the most respectable gentlemen in the town, several requesting of me to accompany them to the prison for the purpose of introduction. Indeed, so marked was the attention paid to them on this occasion that an indifferent spectator would be led to consider them rather as the governors of the town than as prisoners. On the 28th and 29th I had many conversations on this subject with the officers and gentlemen of the place, and at length I was myself, together with five other gentlemen (two for each of the three prisoners), bound in five hundred pounds severally; and Messrs. Harvey, Fitzgerald and Colclough themselves individually, in one thousand pounds security for their appearance at the next assizes. It was further conditioned that, although they were all three bailed, only two should be at large at any one time, but that they might take their turns at going abroad interchangeably at their discretion, provided 'one should always remain in gaol as a guarantee for the return of the rest.'" How this embassy fared will appear in the sequel. The force of royal troops that now held possession of Wexford amounted to 1,200 men, including regular troops, yeomanry, militia and armed citizens.

Of this large force ex-Colonel Watson, though not formally appointed, undertook the command, to which important trust the energy and courage he so signally displayed very justly entitled him. But the brave old veteran did not seem quite successful in inspiring his own spirit into his followers. The hopes of turning the tide of insurgent warfare from the town, which for a while upheld their sinking spirits, were quite dispelled on the arrival of Mr. Colclough that evening to announce



the final determination of their enemies. That gentleman, without dismounting from his horse, proceeded straightway to the "bull-ring," and there announced in a loud voice to the people, who anxiously gathered around him, the answer returned by the insurgents to the deputation, and their resolve to attack the town.

Having delivered this unwelcome message, he proceeded to visit Mr. Harvey, who was still detained in prison, and having had a short interview with that unlucky captive, rode off to his own residence at Ballyteigue. The tidings brought by Mr. Colcough completed the dismay of the loyalists. The ships in the harbor, before quite sufficiently filled with people, were now overcrowded. The places of business were all closed as on a holiday, but there was no appearance of Sabbath calm or tranquility in Wexford. Every loyalist beheld his own feelings of terror and anxiety reflected upon the pallid faces of his brethren. As night fell the scouts came in announcing the approach of the enemy. Meantime the military stood to their arms, alert and watchful. Fearing lest the insurgents might enter by the bridge, its porteullis was raised, and all means of approach from that side cut off. At daybreak the tarred piles of that structure were discovered to be on fire, nor could the conflagration be extinguished till the footboards were quite consumed. All night long the streets echoed to the heavy tramp of the military as they passed to and fro between the different posts, while the only other sound that invaded the silence of the night was the wailing of women and children, terrified by the anticipation of coming evil. At length morning broke, and its light showed the loyalists a great multitude of people assembled at Ferrybank, at the farther end of the bridge, evidently with no friendly purpose.

The 13th Regiment, under General Hawcett, being expected to arrive on this day, Colonel Watson resolved to make a diversion in their favor, and by engaging the attention of the insurgents to facilitate the entry of the royalist general.

With this intent he led out a force of some three hundred of the garrison, taking his route in the direction of the "Three Rocks." More zealous in the cause than his men, the veteran pushed on before them to reconnoitre, but being descried by one of the wary insurgent sentinels, when he had advanced as far as Belmount, he was fired at, and fell pierced with a mortal wound.



On seeing the fall of their leader, the troops, who were following at a safer distance, took to flight—the yeoman cavalry, as they galloped into town, well nigh riding down the infantry. Their arrival but served to complete the dismay of the inhabitants.

Immediately upon the return of this fruitless expedition, a council of war was held, in which it was decided to evacuate the town forthwith. Before quitting the place, the yeomen determined to murder the prisoners in the gaol. But the resolute and wary governor, true to his trust, foiled them on this occasion, as he had done on the previous one, to which we have referred. In the present perilous situation, Mr. Harvey's supposed popularity gave him no little importance in the eyes of the Orange gentry. A number of them waited upon that worthy, but, it must be acknowledged, not very heroic personage. They found him hiding in the chimney of his cell, up which he had clambered on hearing that the yeomanry designed to attack the prison. Being hauled down from that undignified retreat, with no small exertion on the part of his visitors, in a very begrimed condition, he was politely informed of the object in seeking him. His fears abated on being told that instead of coming to take his life his visitors only desired him to try and save their own by proceeding to the insurgent camp and using his influence there to obtain as favorable terms as possible for the loyalists.

He could not, however, be induced to undertake this commission, but consented to write a letter to the insurgents. The epistle penned by Mr. Harvey on this occasion is as follows: "I have been treated in this prison with all possible humanity, and am now at liberty. I have procured the liberty of all the prisoners. If you pretend to Christian charity, do not commit massacre, or burn the property of the inhabitants, and spare your prisoners' lives—B B Harvey. Wednesday, May 30, 1798."

To find some trustworthy person to bear this missive to its destination was the next step to be taken. A Catholic yeoman named Doyle presented himself, but his offer was contemptuously rejected—he was a "Papist," and therefore quite unworthy in the eyes of the senders to undertake any commission on their behalf. At length two brothers, named Richards—both counsellors—were pitched upon, and despatched immediately to the "Three Rocks." No sooner had these gen-

tllemen set out on their mission than the military began to make the hastiest preparations for the flight. The sending of the embassy was in truth nothing but a wily and dishonest stratagem to engage the attention of the insurgents and to retard their advance till all the sinister designs of the royalist garrison had been effected. The town now presented an extraordinary spectacle. The military having thrown off all discipline, presented the appearance of an armed mob, confused, disorderly, and terrified, but cruel and truculent even in the extremity of their terror. The North Cork were the first to quit the town setting fire to their barracks as they abandoned it.

The yeomanry delayed their departure for some time, employing the interval in destroying such ammunition as they could not carry with them—plundering some houses and setting fire to others. All ranks seemed equally affected by the disgraceful panic of the moment—the royalist officers displaying no less cowardice than the common men. Some of these gentlemen tore off their epaulets and other insignia of rank; while others, thinking this precaution insufficient, divested themselves of their uniforms, and replaced them with such tattered and beggarly garments as they could procure, and thus metamorphosed, hurried down to the quay, and threw their swords and pistols into the river. Mr. Hay, a witness of this scene, thus describes it: "The confusion and dismay which prevailed were so great, as no kind of signal for retreat had been given, that officers and privates ran promiscuously through the town, threw off their uniforms, and hid themselves wherever they thought they could be best concealed. Some ran to the different quays in expectation of finding boats to convey them off, and threw their arms and ammunition into the river. All such as could accomplish it embarked on board the vessels in the harbor, having previously turned their horses loose. Some ran to the gaol to put themselves under the protection of Mr. Harvey. . . . In short, it is impossible that a greater appearance of confusion tumult or panic could be at all exhibited."

This scene of confusion and terrified preparation for flight did not escape the vigilant eyes of the multitude assembled since early dawn at Ferrybank. Aware of the intentions of the loyalists, they strove hard to repair the bridge, so as to be enabled to cross over and hinder their escape. While these

transactions were going forward within the town and in its immediate vicinity, the two brothers despatched to the "Three Rocks" by the loyalists were engaged in endeavoring to obtain terms of capitulation from the insurgents. They stipulated on the part of those who sent them that the town, together with all the arms and ammunition it contained should be delivered up to the captors, on the sole condition that the lives of the garrison should be spared. To these terms the insurgents at length agreed, and, detaining one of the brothers, sent the other, in company with Mr Fitzgerald, to see that the conditions were faithfully carried out. When they arrived at the town they found, to their great surprise, that it had already been evacuated by the military.

Meantime the insurgents of Ferrybank having succeeded in repairing the bridge, though too late to prevent the escape of their treacherous enemy, came pouring into the town, rending the air with shouts of triumph. Immediately on entering, they proceeded to the gaol and liberated the prisoners many of whom were their friends and relatives.

The town now threw off its mourning aspect, and assumed a gay and lively air to correspond with the feelings of its new occupants and masters.

In a marvellously brief space of time the quaint old houses of the sober town were profusely decorated with boughs of all sizes, and of every shade of the same pleasant hue. All the doors were thrown open, and the freest hospitality offered to the new-comers, which, though no doubt quite sincere on the part of some of the inhabitants, was more than doubtful on that of others. So suspicious were the peasantry of the sincerity of this welcome when proffered by known loyalists, that they required of them to taste the liquor they offered them before partaking of it, for they believed these worthies were quite capable of poisoning the draught, not being in the least deceived by the false colors they had hung out.

None were at this juncture more demonstrative in their exhibitions of affectionate welcome than those adherents of the Orange faction who remained in town.

No houses were decorated with a greater profusion of green boughs, no hats displayed the green cockade more than theirs. Shortly after the arrival of this body of peasantry, the insurgent army from the "Three Rocks" marched in and halted at the Windmill-Hill. On being informed of the treacherous ruse played upon them by the garrison, they gave way

for a time to violent rage, and could with difficulty be dissuaded by their leaders from setting fire to the town, for they deemed the inhabitants accomplices in the deception practiced upon them. However, the anger of the duped insurgents confined itself to the pillage and burning of one house, that of Captain Boyd of the Wexford yeomanry, a notorious persecutor; with this exception the town sustained no injury at their hands.

Those Orangemen who had taken refuge on board the shipping in the harbor were now led back to town. Two of their number were sacrificed to popular vengeance. These were John Boyd, brother of Captain Boyd, above mentioned, and George Sparrow, an Enniscorthy butcher, both Orangemen, and both of infamous character. They were piked on the quay soon after landing.

While these transactions were in progress in the captured town, the fugitive military were on their way to Duncannon Fort. They marched rapidly through the country till they had gained what they deemed a safe distance from Wexford, and then began to advance at a more leisurely pace till they reached the village of Mayglass. Here they first began to glut their brutal rage by the slaughter of a number of unoffending people who had come out from their houses to gaze upon them as they marched past. They also found time to set fire to the Catholic church at Mayglass. In their further progress no one they encountered escaped their fury, not even the women and children. On the ensuing morning, these murderous banditti, exhausted by their long march, reached Duncannon Fort.

This eventful day at length came to a close, and night fell upon the liberated town as peacefully as if nothing had occurred to disturb its wonted tranquillity; but on the ensuing morning the streets were thronged with a busy and excited multitude. An eager search was instituted for ammunition, of which the insurgents stood sorely in need, and their chagrin was excessive at finding only three barrels of gunpowder. The martial spirit of the victorious insurgents did not suffer them to rest while an enemy trod the soil of their country, nor were their leaders less prompt in action than the men who marched under their command.

Early on the morning succeeding the capture of the town the insurgent leaders issued orders to their men to march out and encamp on the Windmill-Hill, leaving behind such a force as they judged sufficient to garrison the town.





## CHAPTER V.

FATHER JOHN MURPHY JOINED BY FATHERS ROCHE AND KEARNS—  
BATTLE AT NEWTOWN-BARRY—GOREY SURPRISED.

Meantime the armed thousands posted on the Windmill-Hill were told of the final determination of their leaders to divide their force into two divisions, each of which would take a different route. Accordingly, General Harvey and the corps under his immediate command, who were chiefly men from Forth and Bargy, took the direction of Taghmon and encamped there for the night. The second division, comprising those gallant men who had won the battles of Oulart and Enniscorthy, and were for the greater part from the northern parts of the county, set out once more in the direction of Gorey, passing on their way the scenes of their former victories. Though they had consented to the appointment of Harvey as commander-in-chief, they had formed a true estimate of his capability, and justly placed more confidence in the man who had often led them to victory, Father John, their own brave Soggart. On the first day's march, of what we may call their second campaign, they were joined by the Rev. Philip Roche and the Rev. Father Kearns. Father Roche possessed in an eminent degree those personal advantages so highly prized by his countrymen. He was brave and handsome, of pleasing manners, and well fitted in every way to be a popular leader. Father Kearns was a man of great size and strength, whose scorn of danger, and confidence in his own strength and activity, were evinced by his going into action armed only with a heavy riding whip. However, his courage degenerated into harshness, and his self-reliance was unalloyed with other qualities as indispensable in a leader.

Soon after his arrival, Father Kearns proposed that an attack should be made on the soldiery stationed at Newtown-barry, with the design of driving them from thence, and thus opening communication with the counties of Wicklow and Carlow, affording their inhabitants, who were at the time being hunted down like wild beasts, an opportunity of finding a rallying place among the conquering Wexfordmen. This proposal was joyfully consented to, and Father Kearns him-

self being chosen leader of the enterprise he had suggested, soon found himself at the head of about two thousand men, chiefly armed with pikes; for even at this period firearms of any description were rare among the insurgents.

These soldiers of freedom proceeded without delay towards their destination, preserving in their progress as much appearance of military order as could have been expected. They encountered no enemy on their march save some bodies of mounted Yeomanry, who fled as they approached, or if they attempted to make a stand it was but for a moment, being unable to withstand the impetuous charge of the determined pikemen. It is an admitted fact that in few instances could those well-armed and well-mounted men be brought to face the undisciplined and ill-armed insurgents, who had little to rely on but their native valor, heightened by the sense of wrong and the consciousness of fighting in a just cause.

When this division arrived in sight of the town they halted in order to repose for a brief while after their long and rapid march. During this halt one of the men approached Father Kearns, and modestly suggested that it would be prudent, in case the attack succeeded, to occupy a similar position on the opposite side of the town as a precaution against any possible surprise. Unfortunately Father Kearns slighted this wise counsel, and thereby, as we shall see, lost the town, though successful in the first assault. After a short interval of rest, Father Kearns, having first invoked aloud the Divine aid, gave the signal for attack. The insurgents rushed down the slope of the hill on which they had halted, with their customary impetuosity, and in a few minutes reached the town. Their confident courage was nothing daunted by the sight of five hundred regular troops, under the command of Colonel L'Estrange, arrayed against them, together with several corps of the despised yeomanry; for the people had so often defeated both soldiery and yeomanry that they began, as a natural consequence, to hold them in contempt.

On this occasion, as on others, the united charge of the stalwart peasantry, their semi-military line bristling with the formidable pike, carried all before it. After a brief and feeble resistance, the regular troops retreated with the greatest precipitation; and as for the yeomen, they galloped off, after making a feint of resistance, to seek revenge for their defeat in burning the houses and slaughtering the defenseless friends of their peasant foemen.

However, all the advantages thus gained by the gallant onset of the insurgents were lost by the neglect of the precaution above mentioned, for the flying soldiery were encountered, when only a short distance outside the town, by a detachment of the King's County Militia despatched to their aid. On receiving this timely reinforcement they rallied, and soon determined to return to the town, reckoning on their taking the enemy by surprise.

Acting on this resolve, they returned once more, and found their lately victorious enemy dispersed here and there through the place, and, as might be supposed, had little difficulty in driving them outside the walls. Thus what valor had so lately won, lack of prudence now lost.

However, though surprised and divided, they fought bravely, and inflicted, in their retreat, considerable loss on the enemy. In this way was Newtownbarry lost and won, and with it all the advantages that would have accrued to the insurgent cause from its possession.

Thus were all the efforts of these gallant peasants rendered unavailing by the neglect of an ordinary precaution. But, while we regret the error and its consequences, we can hardly blame such novices in the art of war for an error into which trained troops have often fallen.

The men whose enterprise had thus failed were now forced to march by small detachments to reach the only rallying place known to them—the camp on Vinegar Hill. The greater number of them reached that rendezvous the same night, and early on the following morning set out to rejoin their comrades whom they found encamped on the hill of Carrigrew. They were received kindly by them, and found them busily engaged in acquiring some knowledge of military manoeuvres under the direction of such patriotic yeomen as had left their corps, or had been expelled therefrom on suspicion of being United Irishmen. While the insurgents were thus wisely endeavoring to acquire that training which, united to their dauntless valor, would have rendered them invincible, the English commanders were not idle, but were making preparations to attack, with an irresistible force, the foe they had at first despised, but had now learned to dread.

On the morning of the 4th of June tidings reached the insurgent camp at Carrigrew that two divisions of the regular army were on the march from Gorey and Carnew to attack

them, moreover, that each division of this formidable force was furnished with artillery, and accompanied by several corps of mounted yeomanry. They were to meet near the insurgent position, and unite for a combined attack. Of the large force thus acting in concert against the insurgents, General Loftus and General Walpole were the commanders.

To oppose such a formidable array of trained troops, provided with every warlike munition, and led on by officers of high rank and experience, the means at the command of the insurgent leaders seemed but too inadequate. They were strong, indeed, in numbers, and in the possession of a brave and determined spirit, but destitute of all else that render men formidable in war. They had neither cavalry nor artillery, their firearms were but few, and their supply of powder and ball extremely scanty.

The greater part of the men were, it is true, by this time possessed of pikes—admirable weapons when used in a close fight, but otherwise useless. Yet, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, which would have been quite sufficient to induce any but Irishmen to abandon the contest as useless, the men at Carrigrew, confident of their courage, and proud of their heroic leaders, resolved to meet their enemies once more in battle. The insurgent leaders having consulted together in this perilous and critical situation, concerning the best course to be adopted, resolved to march without delay and attack that division of royal troops just then advancing towards them from Gorey, and having, as they hoped, defeated them, to proceed to the release of the unfortunate men confined and awaiting execution in that town.

Having come to this resolve, the insurgents once more quitted Carrigrew, and, halting at a short distance from that eminence, on level ground, proceeded under the direction of their chiefs to put in practice some of the lessons they had received in the art-military a little while before.

They soon fell into fair marching order, and at the word of command set off at a pace that few armies could have maintained.

A body of two hundred chosen pikemen, with gunsmen interspersed, preceded the main body at the distance of a mile. In the meantime, Colonel Walpole, against whose division they were on the march, had information of their advance, and led out his men to meet them.



Having advanced a short distance beyond Tubberneering, he halted at a spot where the road takes a sharp turn to the right in the direction of Carrigrew, so that a body of men advancing from that direction would be likely to march into sudden view of the enemy, and, consequently, surprised and panic-stricken, would fall an easy prey. Thus reasoned the English chief, and thus, with his chosen troops drawn up in line of battle, his powerful and numerous artillery in good position to sweep the insurgent ranks with a discharge of ball and canister, his cavalry all impatient to make havoc among the peasantry, routed and disordered by the fire of musketry and cannon, the royalist officer awaited the approach of the insurgents.

He was not long kept in expectation.

The advance guard of the insurgents arrived at the point where the road made the sharp turn described, and marching in a compact body, and with a quick step, came suddenly in the presence of their red-coated foes, who instantly welcomed them with a combined and terrible fire of artillery and musketry.

The insurgents, on receiving this unexpected salutation, halted, and one of the few horsemen who accompanied them was instantly despatched by their leader to apprise the main body of the presence of the enemy. During this brief halt the insurgent vanguard had kept their ranks manfully, and now advanced amidst a storm of death-dealing missiles to take up a less exposed position behind a ditch that lay at some distance on their left. While crossing a large field which extended between them and the shelter they sought, they suffered great loss from the enemy, who continued to pour into their thinning ranks a deadly discharge of all arms.

The insurgents at length gained the ditch, which as they had hoped, afforded them protection from the enemy's fire, and thence in their turn commenced and maintained a telling fire on the hostile ranks. The insurgent fire was extremely destructive for those of them who were armed with guns were for the most part practised sportsmen, and the ditch behind which they lay was but half musket shot from the royal troops. Thus the insurgent advance guard galled the royalists and kept them in check, for the latter feared to advance and drive the gunsmen from their shelter, for though insignificant in number, they knew them to be accompanied by the



pikemen, who had ever proved such terrible foes at close quarters.

The main body of their dreaded enemy now appeared in swift and impetuous advance, drawn up in the form of a crescent, and bristling all over with the formidable pike. The advancing insurgents avoided the open ground on which their advance guard had suffered such severe loss, and keeping towards the left, seemed determined to assail the royal troops on their left flank, while the gunsmen engaged them in front.

On seeing this large body advancing to attack his division, already disheartened by the loss they had sustained from the persistent and fatal fire of their sharp-shooting foes, the royalist commander gave orders for retreat.

But while the royal gunners, in obedience to this welcome command, were engaged in harnessing their horses to the gun-carriages, they were surprised and taken, together with their iron charges and all that appertained to them, by the advance guard of the insurgents, who now sallied from behind the ditch they had so well defended.

The insurgents, who were as merciful as they were brave, treated their prisoners kindly, and soon applied themselves to learn from them the management of the destructive weapons they had so gallantly captured.

Colonel Walpole, though thus forced to retreat before his peasant foe, resolved like a brave soldier to make a final stand, and thus decide the contest. With this determination he halted at Clough, a village between Gorey and Tubberneering. Here he was reinforced by a company of grenadiers, despatched by General Loftus to his aid, until that officer should arrive with his whole division. The rallied troops of Walpole, reinforced by the grenadiers of Loftus, were not long awaiting the second attack from their determined foe, who soon appeared in sight, advancing at a running pace, with the evident design of coming immediately to close quarters, and thus avoiding the sustained and destructive fire of their opponents. The English troops had just time to pour a few hasty volleys into the rapidly advancing ranks and then the pikemen closed with them.

The clubbed musket and the bayonet proved in this, as in all former contests, but a poor defence against the long pike borne by the insurgents.

In addition to the advantage of the peasantry derived

from such an effective weapon as the pike in such contests as we describe, they were themselves in strength and agility superior to the royal troops; and practised in every athletic exercise, they wielded their arms with resistless force. The issue of the combat might have been foreseen once the insurgents closed with their foes. The regular troops were completely routed, and fled in the utmost confusion and terror, throwing away their arms and accoutrements to facilitate their escape. Yet with all this they were captured in great numbers by their swift-footed pursuers, who, as usual, treated them with kindness, contrary, as it seemed, to the expectation of the fugitives, many of whom were found with their coats turned in side out, to denote, doubtless, a corresponding change in their sentiments sufficiently great to incline the victors to mercy.

When the contest was over, the gallant Walpole was found lying dead beside his charger on the field, while stretched around were numbers of killed and wounded. Thus ended the engagement at Tubberneering and at Clough.

Of the above described actions, Mr. Plowden says:

“The rebels surprised a division under Colonel Walpole at a place called Tubberneering. The rebels poured a tremendous fire from the fields on both sides of the road, and he received a bullet through the head from the first fire. His troops fled in the utmost disorder, leaving their cannon in the hands of the enemy. They were pursued as far as Gorey, in their flight through which they were galled by the fire of some of the rebels who had taken station in the houses. The unfortunate loyalists of Gorey once more fled to Arklow with the routed army, leaving all their effects behind. While Walpole's division was attacked by the enemy, General Loftus, being within hearing of the musketry, detached seventy men, the grenadier company of the Antrim militia, across the fields to its assistance, but they were intercepted by the rebels and almost all taken or killed. The general, still ignorant of the fate of Colonel Walpole's division, and unable to bring his artillery across the fields, continued his march along the highway, by a long circuit, to the field of battle, where he was first acquainted with the melancholy event. For some time he followed the rebels toward Gorey, but finding them posted on Gorey hill, from which they fired upon him with the cannon taken from Colonel Walpole, he retreated to Carnew; and still,

contrary to the opinion of most of his officers, thinking Carnew an unsafe place, though at the head of twelve hundred effective men, he abandoned that part of the country to the rebels, and retreated nine miles farther, to the town of Tullow, in the county of Carlow."

The insurgents, though wearied by their long march and subsequent hard fighting, pushed on rapidly toward Gorey, resolved to allow their routed foe no time to put into execution the vengeance they were well aware they meditated on the prisoners there confined. So closely did they press on the flying enemy that the latter had no time to rally their broken ranks, or to put into execution their cruel purpose. They had barely time to fire into the window of the prison on those confined therein, who, at the suggestion of Esmond Kyan, one of their number, by throwing themselves on the ground, avoided the otherwise fatal volley. On the arrival of the insurgents at Gorey, the prisoners, who had thus narrowly escaped death were set at liberty.

Esmond Kyan, who understood the management of artillery, was placed in command of the pieces lately captured. The insurgents now pitched their camp on a hill outside the town, and there awaited the appearance of General Loftus, who, as they were aware, was then on his way to join the troops of Walpole, of whose defeat he was yet uninformed.

On the appearance of this officer, he was received with a well-directed discharge from the captured cannon.

This unexpected salute proved too much for the courage of Loftus and his soldiers. Seized with panic, they took to their heels, and were perceived by some of the mounted insurgents sent after them to ascertain their route, in full flight in the direction of Carnew.

The insurgents, well-nigh exhausted by their previous exertions and want of food, did not feel inclined to pursue them, and having no cavalry, were forced to allow them to escape unmolested.

The success of these engagements was chiefly due to the prompt advance of the insurgents to meet Walpole on his march to Carnew, instead of waiting to be attacked by that officer and Colonel Loftus at their encampment on the hill.

By this energetic movement, they disconcerted the plan agreed on by two English leaders, and, as we have seen, put them both to flight in separate engagements.

Loftus seems to have entertained a salutary dread of the pikemen, for it is evident that had he wished to reinforce Walpole, he could have easily arrived in time as well as the detachment of grenadiers that bore a part in the contest.

The inhabitants of Gorey and of the surrounding district, so many of whom had been rescued from death by the success and timely advance of the insurgent army, now came flocking around their deliverers, testifying in every way their gratitude for a boon as great as it was unhopèd for. Many of them declared that on beholding the formidable array on foot, horse and artillery that marched out of the town with the joyful and proud confidence of men who go to certain victory, they entertained but little hope of their ill-armed and undisciplined countrymen offering any effectual resistance.

They, however, affirmed that Walpole felt so confident of victory that he had received several wagers that the "rebels" would not sustain for twenty minutes the combined onset of the royal forces, aided as they were by more than a dozen of yeomen cavalry.

The insurgents, remembering their surprise at Newtownbarry, resolved to take precautions against similar misfortune, and to this effect they took care to post sentinels at all the advances to the town.

They adopted, moreover, the further precaution of posting a strong guard on the road to Arklow, whence they deemed an attack most likely to be made. However, the arrival of a large body of Arklow men at the insurgent camp, with the tidings that the royal troops had evacuated the town, set them at ease on that point.

The night of the 4th of June passed away quietly in the camp of the brave insurgents, whose dauntless courage success had so happily crowned.

Here we may mention that such as escaped of the routed troops of Walpole, after passing through Gorey, continued their flight to Arklow, which they also left behind them, nor finally halted till they reached Dublin. The troops commanded by Loftus ended their flight at Tullow.

These decisive victories made the insurgents masters of the entire county of Wexford, with the exception of Newtownbarry, New Ross and Duncannon Fort, which are situated on its borders. They had also possession of that part of Wicklow which lies between Arklow and the Wexford bound-

dary. The gallant Wicklow men had greatly aided their Wexford neighbors; and had other counties acted such a noble part English rule in Ireland would now be a thing of the past. "It was now," says Mr. Teeling, "that the Irish government became seriously alarmed. They had kindled a war in the heart of the country, and it was doubtful whether they possessed the power of extinguishing it. The incessant marching and countermarching of troops, the fatigues they encountered, the losses they sustained, the several posts they had been forced to abandon, all tended to lower that spirit with which they were animated on first taking the field.

Intemperate counsels had placed the country on the brink of ruin, and the more reflecting on both sides looked with awful suspense to the result. Mr. Fox, ever sensitively alive to the honor of his country and the feelings of humanity, again appealed to the British senate, and implored the minister to halt in his desperate career, and extend, ere it should be too late, the hand of conciliation to Ireland.

"I hold," said he, "documents incontrovertible which show that this sanguinary contest has already cost His Majesty's forces the loss of ten thousand men"; and, in the name of justice and humanity, he moved for an inquiry into the state of Ireland. The feeling and energetic appeal of Mr. Fox was ineffectual, and with it the last hope of reconciliation fled.







NEW ROSS.

"We bravely fought and conquered,  
At Ross and Wexford Town,  
Three Bullet Gate for years to come,  
Shall speak for our renown."

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE BATTLE OF ROSS—A YOUTHFUL HERO—BRAVERY OF AN IRISH WOMAN.

The division of the insurgent army under the immediate command of General-in-Chief Bagenal Harvey, having bivouacked for the night of the 30th near Taghmon, arrived at Carrickburn the next day, where they remained till the 4th of June, when they set out for Corbet Hill, within a mile of Ross, which town it was decided should be attacked on the morning of the ensuing day. The insurgent leaders decided that a simultaneous attack should be made on the town at three different points.

Before General Harvey issued orders for the assault he despatched an aide-de-camp named Furlong with a flag of truce to summon the garrison to surrender.

This commission proved fatal to the bearer, for scarce had Furlong approached within view of the outpost, bearing aloft the flag of truce, than he was fired on by a sentinel and fell mortally wounded. In his pocket was found the following letter from Harvey to General Johnson:

"SIR—As a friend to humanity, I request you will surrender the town of Ross to the Wexford forces now assembled against that town. Your resistance will but provoke rapine and plunder, to the ruin of the innocent. Flushed with victory, the Wexford forces, now innumerable and irresistible, will not be controlled if they meet with resistance. To prevent, therefore, the total ruin of all property in the town, I urge you to a speedy surrender, which you will be forced to in a few hours, with loss and bloodshed, as you are surrounded on all sides. Your answer is required in four hours. Mr. Furlong carries this letter and will bring the answer.

"I am, sir,

"B. B. HARVEY, General Commanding-in-Chief.

"Camp at Corbet Hill, half past three o'clock in the morning, June 25, 1798."

This shooting of bearers of flags of truce seems to have been quite a matter of course with the military. It, however, taught the insurgents that they should neither show mercy to,

nor expect it from, such a faithless foe, and doubtless led to the death of Lord Mountjoy soon after, as he advanced before his regiment with the intention of parleying with them while advancing.

The town of Ross, about to be the scene of a bloody contest, was garrisoned by about two thousand regular troops, under the command of General Johnson, in addition to which large force there were several corps of yeomanry. Ross was at this time a walled town, and the principal entrance from the southern side was by the Three-bullet Gate. Towards this gate the road by which the insurgents were about to advance led in nearly a straight line, with a high ditch at either side. The fields extended to within a few perches of the wall, and were enclosed by ditches similar to those which bounded the road. General Johnson, rightly judging that the principal attack would be made on this gate, had posted thereat a strong force in the most advantageous positions within and without, while two six-pounders were planted so as to pour their fire upon any body of men advancing along the road before mentioned. Behind the ditches on either side of the road, and in every other available cover, soldiers were placed to gall with their fire the expected assailants. It must be admitted that to force an entrance through a post so well guarded was an enterprise of no easy nature, but yet the undisciplined and ill-armed insurgents undertook and effected the task.

All who have written of the eventful period vary materially in their accounts of the battle of Ross. Hay, who seems to be at much pains to obtain accurate information, gives what he, no doubt, believed to be a correct account of the engagement, while Clooney, who took an active part in the affair, differs from him in many important particulars. Both these impartial writers concur, however, in stating that the greater number of the men who formed the camp on Corbet Hill took no part in the battle, and that one of the divisional leaders deserted his post at the very beginning of the assault. It appears that not more than three thousand men took part in the assault, and that great part even of these left before the battle was finally decided. While the insurgents' officers were marshalling their men as best they could preparatory to the attack, they were much annoyed and sustained some loss by a sharp fire maintained by the enemy's outposts. Seeing this, General Harvey ordered Colonel Kelly to charge, and drive

in these outposts with the battalion of Bantry men under his command. This order the brave young colonel so well obeyed that he drove them before him in confusion to the very walls of the town. Kelly found it much easier to lead his men to the charge than to withdraw them from it, and they were soon hotly engaged with the defenders of the gate. Clooney, who had commanded a similar battalion of Bantry men, and had been ordered by Harvey to support Kelly, now rushed forward to join in the fray. The main body of the insurgents, seeing their comrades in actual conflict with the enemy could no longer be restrained, and, despite the efforts of their leaders, poured down swiftly towards the scene of strife. This ardor, so natural in undisciplined men, entirely disconcerted the original plan of assault. The entire battle was now fought between the defenders of the gate and their assailants. From the gates, from the walls, and from the ditches, the military poured a close and terrible fire on the fierce assailants, who, though they fell in great numbers under a withering fire, still kept rushing forward with matchless intrepidity to supply the place of their fallen comrades.

Even those who write in the bitterest spirit of hostility to the insurgents, speak of their conduct on this occasion in the following terms: "Such was their enthusiasm that, though whole ranks of men were seen to fall, they were succeeded by others, who seemed to court the fate of their companions by rushing on our troops with renovated ardor" (Sir Richard Musgrave)

An English officer, forced into an involuntary admiration of the reckless bravery with which those devoted people fought, exclaimed, "that the devils out of hell could not resist them!" After half an hour of this desperate fighting the soldiery began to fall back inside the gate, while their assailants took possession of the barracks, which stood a short distance from the wall. Here it was that the young hero, Colonel Kelly, was disabled by a shot in the thigh. At this period of the fight a strong squadron of the Fifth Dragoon Guards made a sally from the town by a lane, hoping to take the insurgents in the rear. This, however, they failed to do, and were themselves charged by the fierce pikemen, who in a few minutes slew twenty-eight of their number, together with their cornet, Dodwell. An amazon named Doyle, who marched with the insurgent army and bore herself as gallantly as the most



courageous man, now made herself useful by cutting off with a billhook the crossbelts of the fallen dragoons, and handing them, together with the cartouche boxes, to her comrades.

The insurgents having by this time won the gate, General Johnson judged it time to sound a retreat, which signal was obeyed by his troops with more speed than dignity, while their successful opponents, with shouts of triumph, poured into the town for whose possession they had so bravely contended.

Though General Johnson, with the main body of his troops, had evacuated the town, yet the insurgents could not be considered complete masters of it, for the main guard of the hostile army, with two swivel guns, still kept possession of the market place, while Major Vandeleur, with the Clare Militia, still maintained his ground at a suburb called Irishtown. Great numbers of the insurgents were now dispersed throughout the town in search of some refreshments, which they sorely needed.

Some writers assert that on this occasion the peasantry gave way to intemperance, and thereby lost the battle; but their fault, in this particular, has been greatly exaggerated, and it is clear that the subsequent loss of the town was not wholly owing to intemperance. Many of the peasantry who had taken part in the attack upon the town had already departed for their homes, great numbers of the bravest men had been slain, and those that remained in partial possession of the town were well nigh exhausted by continual exertion, that proved too much even for then hardy, vigorous frames.

The town remained in possession of its new masters for some four hours. During this time Colonel S. Clooney collected all the men he could to follow him (and, strange to say, he could not find more than forty), and led them first to dislodge the guard that still kept possession of the market-place; but he was received with so hot a fire from the men that held the building, that he was forced to retreat. Foiled in this attempt, the same brave and energetic chief proceeded, with his small body of men, to drive the Clare Militia from their position at Irishtown.

This was evidently an enterprise of a desperate nature, but Clooney, who seems to have been a man of extraordinary daring, did not seem to think so. He led his handful of weary men across two fields, all the while exposed to the fire of the enemy, but naively confesses that he could not get them to

mount a ditch that separated them from their far more numerous foes.

Meantime General Johnson, who, with the main body of his army, had been compelled, as we have seen, to beat a hasty retreat from the town, finding himself unmolested in his retreat, altered his previous determination of altogether abandoning the place to the insurgents, and resolved to make a final effort to regain possession of it. The County of Dublin Militia, burning to avenge the death of their colonel, Lord Mountjoy, led the advance. The result might have been anticipated; they found their enemies dispersed through the town, unprepared for the attack, and succeeded in driving them out. The insurgents, whom defeat had once more united, soon renewed the attack with marvellous courage. Once more these dauntless men rushed upon their disciplined foes and, despite the fearful carnage made in their ranks by the terrible fire poured upon them, they charged, pike in hand, to the very muzzle of the musket and the mouth of the cannon, and drove the soldiery in precipitate flight from the town.

Hay states that on this occasion, as on that of their previous success, the victorious insurgents indulged in intemperance. But this statement must be regarded as at least doubtful, and the victory finally won by the king's troops must be attributed to the havoc made in the insurgent ranks by the long-continued fire of the artillery and musketry.

Soon after this repulse the troops returned once more to the assault, and the victory crowned their persevering bravery. After an almost continuous fight of thirteen hours' duration, victory finally rested upon the royal standard. This contest, though it may be deemed inconsiderable with regard to the numbers therein engaged, has never been surpassed in the annals of war for the bravery and determination displayed by the combatants on both sides. Clooney, who is a truthful and impartial writer, estimates the loss of both contending hosts to have been nearly equal, that is, about three hundred killed and five hundred wounded on either side. As for the accounts given by such writers as were professed partisans of the government they are utterly unworthy of credit, as they are proved to have been guilty of systematic and deliberate falsehood and exaggeration.

I am inclined to believe that Mr. Clooney, in his desire not to exaggerate, greatly underrates the loss sustained in this

action. Taking into account the fierceness of the struggle and its duration, it is impossible to place it so low. Sir Jonah Barrington estimates the loss on both sides to have been far greater, and is of opinion that upwards of 5,000 men were either killed or consumed by the conflagration. The same author relates a singular incident that occurred during the battle: The insurgents were on the point of being finally repulsed, when a young gentleman of thirteen years of age, from the town of Wexford, of the respectable family of Lett, in that town, who had stolen away from his mother and joined General Harvey on Corbet Hill, saw the disorder of the men and the incapacity of their leaders, and with a boyish impulse he snatched up a standard, and, calling out, "Follow me who dare!" rushed down the hill, two or three thousand pikemen rapidly following him in a tumultuous crowd, and uttering the most appalling cries. In a moment he was at the gate, rallied his party, and with his reinforcement, rushed upon the garrison, who, fatigued and astonished at the renewed vigor of their enemy, were again borne down and compelled, with much loss, fighting step by step, to retire towards the bridge.

This was, perhaps, the most important engagement of the entire insurrection, and had the insurgents succeeded, the final event might have been far different. General Harvey now ordered a retreat to be sounded, and the dispirited insurgents marched off to their former encampment on Carrickburn, unmolested in their retreat by the enemy, who were content with the success they had achieved. The intrepid woman, Doyle, before mentioned, seeing the insurgents about to quit the scene of their late combat, and leave a gun they had brought with them behind, seated herself upon it, and spiritedly declared that if "they did not bring her dear little gun with them she would remain behind also at all risks." Ashamed not to comply with the request of the heroine, some of the weary men gave her their aid in conveying away her strange favorite.

We must now proceed unwillingly to record a deed of savage cruelty perpetrated by some of the dastardly runaways from the battle of Ross. That the brave men who took part in that combat had no share in the savage deed is distinctly stated by Clooney. Alas! that such recreants had power to stain the otherwise unblemished laurels of the brave insurgents of Wexford.

The burning of Scullabogue has often been cited as an instance of fiendish cruelty. We seek not to paint it otherwise. If it proves anything, it is that there were men amongst the insurgents as cruel and cowardly as amongst their enemies, but their number must have been far smaller in proportion, nor do we find that the insurgent leaders encouraged their followers to the perpetration of such excesses, but on the contrary, that they did all in their power to prevent them. Can the apologists or panegyrists of the English soldiery or of their more savage allies say with truth as much in their defense? For one black deed such as the one now referred to, we can cite hundreds perpetrated by the partisans of English rule, not in the madness of passion but with cold-blooded deliberation. For instance, the insurgent depot of wounded men burned in New Ross by the military, the insurgent hospital at Enniscorthy by the yeoman and the murder by the militia and yeomanry of the sick and wounded insurgents in the hospital of Wexford, when the royalists took possession of that town. An entire chapter might be filled with instances of similar ruthless deeds perpetrated by military, militia and yeomanry.

We must now proceed to describe what occurred at Scullabogue. Before the insurgents marched to the attack in Ross, they despatched their prisoners, to the number of about one hundred, to be confined in the barn of Scullabogue House, at the foot of Carrickburn, and there stationed a guard over them. Of these prisoners we may mention that some twenty were Catholics, and when we say that the remainder were Protestants, it must be remembered that the majority of persons professing Protestantism had manifested by every means in their power the bitterest hostility to their insurgent countrymen in their desperate struggle for liberty, so that they were confined, not as Protestants, but as persons who in a life and death struggle had ranged themselves under a hostile standard. While the battle was raging at Ross, runaways from both armies filled the country around with the most contradictory rumors. At length it was known that the day had gone against the insurgents. The minds of the people were much inflamed by the account of the shooting of the bearer of the flag of truce, the burning of houses with their inmates, and the indiscriminate slaughter by the soldiery.

Popular fury is wild and unreasoning, and destructive in



its course as a hurricane, and only requires an object on which to wreak its vengeance; in this instance, unhappily, the object was at hand—the unfortunate prisoners in the barn at Scullabogue. Thither rushed an infuriated crowd, composed mainly of runaways from the battle of Ross, and others who were driven by a thirst for vengeance for their own wrongs to take part in the cruel deed which ensued. In vain Murphy, the captain of the guard, resisted at the peril of his own life—he and his men were fiercely thrust aside, and fuel was immediately applied to the walls of the barn. In vain did the victims endeavor to escape, they came forth from the burning fabric but to fall by the pikes of the savage mob. Those who remained within screamed and implored mercy in piteous accents. But why prolong the description of such a revolting scene? The barn with all the unfortunate beings it contained, was consumed in the flames. Their terrible revenge being accomplished, the murderers dispersed. The brave men who had fought at Ross heard on their return to Carrickburn with horror and regret of this detestable act of cruelty, and without a doubt had they then discovered the murderers they would have inflicted on them such punishment as they deserved.

Of this horrid transaction Mr Plowden discourses as follows. “Bloody as was the carnage at New Ross, where the rebels were said to have lost between two and three thousand men, the horrors of that scene vanish before the inhuman massacre of a number of unfortunate prisoners, men, women and children, mostly Protestants, burned to death in a barn at Scullabogue on the evening of that same day. Scullabogue House, which is the property of a Mr Kind, was situated at the foot of Carrickburn Mountain. When the rebel army marched to Corbet Hill, their prisoners had been left under a guard, commanded by John Murphy, of Longhnaghur. The runaways declared that the royal army in Ross were shooting all the prisoners, and butchering the Catholics who had fallen into their hands, and feigned an order from Harvey for the execution of those at Scullabogue. This order which Harvey, himself a Protestant, and a man of humanity, was utterly incapable of giving, Murphy is said to have resisted, but his resistance was in vain. Thirty-seven were shot and piked at the hall-door; and the rest, one hundred and eighty-four in number, according to report, crammed into a barn, were



burned alive, the roof being fired, and straw thrown into the flames to feed the conflagration."

In the same year in which the above detailed massacre was enacted, a gentleman named Frizel, who was amongst the prisoners, was examined at the Bar of the House of Commons concerning the affair. He was asked every question that could be suggested relative to the massacre, to which his answers were substantially as follows: "That having been taken prisoner by a party of the rebels, he was confined to a room on the ground floor in Scullabogue House, with twenty or thirty other persons; that a rebel guard with a pike stood near the window, with whom he conversed; that persons were frequently called out of the room in which we was, by name, and he believes were soon after shot, as he heard the report of muskets shortly after they had been called out; and that he understood that many were burned in the barn, the smoke of which he could discover from the window; that the sentinel pikeman assured him that they would not hurt a hair of his head, as he was always known to have behaved well to the poor; that he did not know of his own knowledge, but only from the reports current amongst the prisoners what the particular cause was for which the rebels had set fire to the barn." Upon which Mr. Ogle rose with precipitancy from his seat, and put this question to him with great eagerness: "Sir, tell us what the cause was!"

It having been suggested that the question would be more regularly put from the chair, it was repeated to him in that form, and Mr. Frizel answered, that the only cause he, or he believed the other prisoners, ever understood induced the rebels to this action was, that they had received intelligence that the military were again putting all the rebel prisoners to death in the town of Ross as they had done at Dunlavin and Carlow. Mr. Ogle asked no more questions of Mr. Frizel, and he was soon afterwards dismissed from the bar.

With a view to putting a stop to any repetition of such disgraceful and barbarous deeds, General Harvey immediately issued a proclamation, in which he threatened death to all who should, under any pretext, be guilty of outrages to person or property. This proclamation was as follows:

"At a meeting of the general and several officers of the united army of the county of Wexford, the following resolutions were agreed upon:

“Resolved, That the commander-in-chief shall send guards to certain baronies, for the purpose of bringing in all men they shall find loitering and delaying at home, or elsewhere, and that if any resistance be given to those guards so to be sent by the commanding officer's orders, it is our desire and orders that such persons so giving resistance shall be liable to be put to death by the guards who are to bear a commission for that purpose; and all such persons found to be loitering and delaying at home, when brought in by the guards, shall be tried by courtmartial, appointed and chosen from among the commanders of all the different corps, and be punished with death.

“Resolved, That all officers shall immediately repair to their respective quarters, and remain with their different corps, and not depart therefrom under pain of death, unless authorized to quit by written orders from the commander-in-chief for that purpose. It is also ordered that a guard shall be kept in the rear of the different armies, with orders to shoot all persons who shall fly or desert from any engagement, and that these orders shall be taken notice of by all officers commanding in such engagement. All men refusing to obey their superior officers, to be tried by courtmartial and punished according to their sentence. It is also ordered that all men who shall attempt to leave their respective quarters where they have been halted by the commander-in-chief, shall suffer death, unless they shall have leave from their officers for so doing. It is ordered by the commander-in-chief, that all persons who have stolen or taken away any horse or horses, shall immediately bring in such horses to the camp, at headquarters, otherwise for any horse that shall be seen or found in the possession of any person to whom he does not belong, that person shall, on being convicted thereof, suffer death. And any goods that shall have been plundered from any house, if not brought into headquarters, or returned immediately to the houses or owners, that all persons so plundering as aforesaid, shall, on being convicted thereof, suffer death.

“It is also resolved, that any person or persons who shall take upon them to kill or murder any person or persons, or burn any house, or commit any plunder, without special written orders from the commander-in-chief, shall suffer death.

By order of, “B. B. HARVEY, Commander-in-Chief.

“Francis Breen, Sec. and Adj.

“Headquarters, Carrickbyrne, Camp, June 6, 1798.”

In Wexford town a similar proclamation was issued about the same time.

The above given proclamation was the last issued by Bagenal Harvey, for there were loud murmurs against him arising from his conduct at the battle of Ross. He soon after resigned his command and was succeeded therein by the Rev. General Philip Roche.

On the third day after the disastrous battle of Ross, the insurgents quitted Carrickburn Hill, and proceeded to that of Slieve Kilter, near which eminence flows the river Barrow. On the first day of their encampment on this hill, they captured a gunboat which, with two others that escaped, was on its way to Waterford. On board they found, amongst other things, despatches from military officers concerning various engagements that had taken place between the insurgents and the King's troops. These reports were found, on examination, exaggerated and one-sided in the extreme—the loss of the insurgents in every engagement was enormously exaggerated, and that of the royal troops proportionately diminished. Our readers may judge of the value of such histories, such as Musgrave's and Maxwell's, compiled from such truthful documents.



Composed from the *Book of Kells*.



## CHAPTER VII

### LACK OF PROVISIONS—LEARNING TO ACQUIRE MILITARY DISCIPLINE —THE PIKE MEN.

The second division of the insurgent army, by whom Generals Walpole and Loftus had been so signally defeated, remained during the 5th and 6th of June in their encampment on Gorey Hill, employing this interval of comparative repose in acquiring further knowledge of military movements, and in sending out reconnoitering parties to ascertain the movements of the enemy, or in procuring such provisions as were necessary for the sustenance of their numerous army, which this time amounted to about fifteen thousand men. The latter task they found a rather arduous one, for the hordes of Orangemen, corps of yeomanry, and bodies of regular troops, had subsisted at the cost of the unfortunate people for months; and not content with taking by force what they required, they wantonly destroyed what they could not use. Under these circumstances the requisitionists from the insurgent camp found it extremely difficult to obtain the necessary supplies. It was in one of these forays that the house of Hunter Gowan, of infamous memory, was burned—an inadequate retaliation, indeed, for the fiendish deeds of cruelty perpetrated by the inhuman villain. At length the insurgent chiefs deemed the time was come when the attack on Carnew should be made, and, accordingly, they left their camp on Gorey Hill, and directed their march toward that town on the 7th, about mid-day.

Towards evening, the insurgents drew near Carnew, and encamped on Kileavan Hill, in the vicinity of the town. This march on Carnew had been made to satisfy the people of that town and the surrounding neighborhood, who had suffered extremely from the cruelty of their enemies, who had long trampled on them without mercy, till, driven to madness by their unprovoked wrongs, they breathed nothing but a spirit of revenge and retaliation.

This spirit manifested itself in the burning of the houses of their persecutors, and as Carnew was mainly inhabited by Orangemen, it was in a great measure destroyed. Yet, ex-



traordinary to relate, though the oppressed inhabitants of Carnew had now many of their enemies completely in their power, it does not appear that any of them suffered death at their hands. This, under the circumstances, was a marvellous instance of forbearance, considering the cruel wrongs they had sustained. Some, however, of the Orange inhabitants were detained as hostages, with the intention of exchanging them for prisoners in the hands of the yeomanry. In the meantime, General Loftus, having heard of the intended advance of the insurgents on Carnew, had marched out of the town, and hastened to shut himself up in Tullow, where he thought himself at a secure distance from a foe he had now been taught to dread.

The English general could well estimate the advantage of fighting behind trenches, where he could use musket and cannon against men whose chief arm was the pike. The unwelcome tidings having reached the camp on Kileavan Hill that the town of Arklow had been occupied by the royal troops in great force, it was forthwith determined by the insurgents to return to their former position on Gorey Hill, and there prepare for an attack on the retaken town.

The insurgents rightly deemed that the crisis in their fortunes had arrived, and that to drive the formidable force of English troops out of Arklow would task their utmost energies, sadly deficient as they were in some of the chief requisites for the undertaking. They had numbers of brave men, it is true, but the greater part of them were armed with a weapon that, though unequalled in close fight, was of little use against an army who fought from behind an entrenched position. The artillery of the insurgents was insignificant, both as to the number of pieces and their calibre, and, though useful against an enemy in the open field, proved inefficient when the latter took refuge behind stone walls or earthen entrenchments. In addition to the serious disadvantages, the ammunition for the few smaller firearms in the possession of the insurgents was well-nigh exhausted, and they had no means of obtaining a sufficient supply. This was but partially supplied by the arrival of a small barrel of powder from Wexford, sent with great reluctance, the inhabitants affirming that it was needed for the defence of the town.

Thus it will be seen that the insurgents were but poorly provided with every munition of war, and notwithstanding,

relying on their own dauntless courage, they resolved to continue the contest. The continued success that had hitherto attended their army must be attributed in a great measure to the excellent qualities of the gallant men who led them to fight. Amongst those may be mentioned Anthony Perry, Esmond Kyan, together with the heroic and faithful priests, Fathers John and Michael Murphy.

Father John continued to be the idol of the brave men whom he led, and who admired in him the perfection of their own courage—always fighting in the foremost ranks, ever ready to cheer and rally those who wavered in the fight, skilful and cool after the battle to improve the victory, kind to console and warm with his own heroic ardor the humblest of his followers when their spirits, less lofty and less firm than his, drooped under the calamities of unequal war.

His matchless daring excited the admiration even of the bravest. The men fought like lions in his presence, and seeing him fearlessly exposing himself where danger was most rife, they were emulous of imitating a leader who evinced such a noble contempt for the perils of the fight.

But mere personal bravery, however great, either in the chiefs or those they led, could not fully compensate for the lack of military discipline. It is unity of action and concentration of power that form the strength of an army. This truth was keenly felt by the insurgents. To acquire this chief element of power, they had from the outset directed their efforts. To this end they conducted as closely as they could the order observed by regular troops, forming themselves into companies and regiments, appointing their captains, colonels, and generals, holding councils of war before undertaking any important enterprise, and posting sentinels around their camps.

As the insurrection went on the recruits they received from the yeomanry and militia enabled them to make a more rapid advance towards acquiring the discipline they sought.

All the time not engaged in actual combat was devoted to the practice of military manoeuvres. The intelligent peasantry showed remarkable capacity for profiting by the instructions they received, so that after a short while they were able to perform, though in an imperfect fashion, the ordinary military evolutions.

In consequence, we find them every day more capable of coping with their disciplined enemies.

In one instance we see them maintaining for several hours a fight with a superior number of royal troops under a brave and able general, and retiring unpursued when their ammunition was exhausted. From these facts it is plain that to drive a brave people into insurrection is a dangerous experiment for any Government to make; for every day of continued warfare renders the insurgents more capable of contending with regular troops, giving them confidence in their own strength and skill in the use of arms.

This was so evident during the contest in Wexford that many persons competent to form a correct opinion on the matter did not hesitate to affirm that had the rest of Ireland afforded any assistance to the Wexford men, the Government would have found it impossible to quell the insurrection. The greatest obstacle to their success was the lack of gunpowder, which they did not manufacture.

The greatest number of the bravest and most efficient men in the insurgent army were farmers or their sons, who, being keen sportsmen, were consequently good marksmen. Many of these were provided with the long guns used in fowling upon the Slaney, excellent weapons, which sent a bullet farther than the muskets of the soldiery. The number of insurgents, however, who were furnished with firearms of any description was small compared with that of those men whose only weapon was the pike. But this weapon, though excellent, was useless save in a close fight. Then, indeed, it was irresistible. No force of cavalry could break a square of embattled pikemen, nor could anybody of horse or foot long withstand the shock of their headlong onset.

A sharpened hook on one side of the pike blade was used in cutting the bridle of the cavalry soldier, and this once severed, his horse became unmanageable and he himself completely at the mercy of his opponent. The author was informed by an old insurgent who had fought at Vinegar Hill, Oulart, and Arklow, that all the pikemen required was "to get at the soldiery."

But this was the difficulty. To advance in the face of a body of soldiery pouring in amongst them a destructive fire, to which they could not reply, would be wanton loss of life, and was in consequence a course rarely adopted by the insurgents save when the lack of ammunition left them no alternative.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### MORE ABOUT THE ORANGEMEN AND THEIR ATROCITIES—LIBERALITY OF THE CATHOLICS—SEVERE MEASURES AT VINEGAR HILL.

Wexford county was now the scene of a war which, considering the numbers engaged, and the fierceness wherewith it was waged, was altogether disproportionate to its narrow area. The royal troops within the limits of this one county could not have amounted to less than 90,000 men, including the yeomanry, whose large force was being every day augmented, while the peasantry who bore arms of any sort did not amount to more than 30,000 men. On one side was discipline and almost unlimited resources, on the other side was seen only the desperate bravery of the men who fought for life and freedom. It had now become a struggle for victory or death—success or utter destruction between the contending parties. Scenes of bloodshed and cruelty continually exhibited were beginning to work their effect on the minds of the people, who, seeing that when vanquished they received no mercy at the hands of the enemy, resolved on their part to show none.

In the school of bloodshed Orangemen were the principal masters, and against them the popular vengeance was chiefly directed. From the many deeds of cruelty and constant retaliation we may cite the following, which are well authenticated:

When the insurgents obtained possession of Enniscorthy, they found the dead body of a drummer of the North Cork Militia hanging in the lodgings of a Mr. Hancock, a Protestant minister and a magistrate, and having learned, on inquiry, that he had been put to death by the Orangemen for refusing to join in playing certain offensive party tunes, they naturally considered him as a martyr to their cause, and proceeded to avenge his death by shooting several of the most noted Orangemen among their prisoners. Hay also mentioned that the insurgents, in revenge for the cruel murder of an idiot boy near the bridge of Scarawalsh by a party of cavalry, shot fourteen of their prisoners. If such cruel deeds were enacted occasionally under the impulse of ungov-



ernable passion by the peasantry, they were habitually practised in cold blood and as a matter of course by their enemies.

On the departure of the great body of insurgents on the 31st of May, those of their brethren who remained, aided by the populace of the town, instituted a search for such Orangemen as yet remained at large, with the intention of consigning them to prison.

The first they went in quest of was Mr. Turner of Newpark, a magistrate, who had incurred their resentment by setting fire to some houses at Oulart previous to the battle fought at that place on the 27th. Having found the gentleman in question at Mr. Harvey's lodgings they seized upon him, and forthwith led him down to prison, disregarding the entreaties made by Messrs. Harvey, Hay and Fitzgerald in his favor. Several of the most obnoxious of the prisoners having been previously liberated through the influence of their friends, the people now insisted that no one should be freed from confinement in this irregular manner, but only on producing a certificate of their former good conduct, signed by a sufficient number of their neighbors. On the same day that the above detailed incidents occurred, Captain Keough was chosen military governor of Wexford. Under his supervision the town was divided into wards, each furnishing a company of armed men, with officers of their own choice. Every evening these companies were paraded on the quay, while with military regularity guards were struck off and relieved, and passwords and countersigns given. In the country parishes a similar organization was soon after adopted. While the insurgent army yet remained in deliberation on Windmill-hill, a large body of the men of the barony of Forth marched into the town, with Mr. Cornelius Grogan, of Johnstown Castle, at their head. This aged gentleman, though entirely passive in these proceedings, did not escape the vengeance that fell on no more guiltless head, but his fate was nobler than that which befell his brother Thomas, who was slain at Arklow leading the Castletown yeomanry against the pikemen.

We must not forget to mention that in the council of war held by the insurgents on Windmill-Hill, before setting out on their new campaign, Mr. Bagenal Harvey was chosen commander-in-chief. This selection was most ill-judged, for Harvey, though in many respects an excellent man, was not possessed of talents to qualify him for such an important com-



mand. It must, however, be regarded by all fair-minded persons as a proof that the Catholics, who form such a vast majority of the population of Ireland, are far too generous and enlightened to entertain rancour against those who differ from them in their views of religious truth, but on the contrary, have ever shown themselves enthusiastically grateful to such Protestants as have been willing to join them in their struggle for freedom. As a further evidence of this truth we may state the fact that the greater number of their chosen chiefs were Protestants or Presbyterians, and no voice was ever raised amongst their followers to reproach or taunt them with the fact.

The Wexford insurgents, fully sensible of the desperate nature of the struggle upon which they had entered, displayed the utmost energy in the efforts they made to carry it on successfully. Every smith and carpenter in the town of Wexford and its environs was now hard at work in the fabrication of blades and handles to that "queen of weapons, the pike."

In a short time every insurgent was provided with one of these efficient weapons; and while every hand grasped a pike, every hat displayed a green cockade.

Four oyster boats, each manned with a crew of thirty-five men, were fitted out to cruise in the offing, and by boarding passing ships to obtain provisions, which were sorely needed, as the usual markets were quite deserted. At the same time two pieces of cannon were mounted on the old fort of Rosslare, to fire on any vessel of war that should attempt to cross the bar; while, to render still more difficult the entrance of such vessels, two sloops were sunk at the mouth of the harbor.

As an indication of the hopes the people entertained at this period of severing their connection with England and shaking off the yoke that had galled them for centuries, bank notes issued by establishments that had Government security were regarded as quite valueless, specie alone being proffered or accepted in buying or selling. Indeed, so low had paper money fallen in the common estimation that it was no unusual thing to see men lighting their pipes with them, or using them as gun wadding. However, money in any shape was little needed, for every kind of provision was supplied from the public stores, on the presentation of a ticket from the committee. Such persons as preferred to purchase what they needed in the market could get good meat at one penny a pound, and

other commodities at a proportionately cheap rate.

The little fleet of armed oyster boats was meantime actively employed in cruising to and fro outside the harbor, and boarding such vessels as were so unlucky as to come within their reach. Captures of this kind, made by their exertions, were so numerous that a fair supply of provisions was maintained in town, and the wants of the inhabitants supplied. But on the 20th one of these little vessels alighted upon a prize of a different nature from any that had been hitherto made. This was a vessel, on board of which they found Lord Kingsborough, Colonel of the North Cork Militia, with two of his officers, who, unaware that Wexford had fallen into the hands of the insurgents, were on their way thither to join their regiment. These gentlemen were brought into town by their captors; and on arriving there were conducted first to the residence of Captain Keough, whence they were soon after, at the urgent demand of the people, transferred to a house in the bull-ring (an inn called the Cape of Good Hope), around which guards were stationed to prevent their escape. This happened on the 2nd of June. On the following day a large body of the inhabitants of the barony of Forth, who had procured arms, passed through the town on their way to join the insurgents at Carrickbyrne; and a corps from the Faythe (a Wexford suburb inhabited chiefly by the families of seafaring men) set off on the evening of the same day for the camp at Carrigrew.

During this time, while the Catholic party in Wexford enjoyed undisputed sway, not the slightest disposition was manifested by them to injure or outrage in any way their Protestant fellow-townsmen. The resentment of the people was directed exclusively against Orangemen. This fact is, perhaps inadvertently, acknowledged even by Sir Richard Musgrave.

But the Protestants were ill at ease, and evinced their distrust of the sincerity of their fellow-townsmen, though so unequivocally expressed, by the constant importunities wherewith they assailed the priests for admittance into the Catholic Church. However, the Catholic clergy, being well convinced of the real motive of this sudden change in religious opinions, firmly refused to comply with their request. But these strange converts were not to be put off. They followed the priests wherever they went, were constant in their attendance at the Catholic church, and showed their earnestness while there by

sprinkling holy water copiously over their persons, and frequently making the sign of the cross in the most orthodox fashion. It was afterwards noticed that some of the most zealous of these converts were the most prompt to come forward to give their testimony against those whose religious faith they pretended to adopt. Thus it was that cowardice and cruelty are generally to be found in company. The principal Catholic inhabitants in the town used their utmost endeavors to banish all apprehension from the minds of their heterodox brethren, and requested that the services which had been discontinued in the Protestant church should be carried on as usual. But to this the Protestants themselves would by no means give their consent. No truth, indeed, has been more clearly shown forth than that the Catholics of Wexford were possessed by no persecuting spirit. Traitors were punished with the same impartial justice, whether they happened to be Catholics or Protestants.

But beyond all, informers were held in such detestation that their fate excited no compassion in any breast. In bringing these wretches to condign punishment, the famous, or as some may deem him, the infamous Captain Dixon strenuously exerted himself. An informer named Thomas Murphy (a Catholic) had caused, by his false testimony, the transportation of Father Dixon, a relative of the captain's. This wretched man was the first that felt his vengeance. On Sunday, the 3rd of June, while the Catholic inhabitants were assisting at Mass, the captain repaired to the gaol, from which he led out the informer, conveyed him straightway to the bull-ring, where he had him shot by three revenue officers, whom he compelled by threats to become his executioners.

This was a lawless and desperate act on the part of Dixon, but he had been deeply injured, and his conduct, though culpable, must be admitted to be far less so than that of those Orange gentry who put unfortunate people, who had never done them any injury, to the most cruel death. Yet those who stigmatize this rude son Neptune as a monster, pass over lightly enough the diabolic atrocities perpetrated by the infamous Hunter Gowan and his compeers, so great is the influence that the accident of birth or of social positions exercises over some minds.

The 14th of the same month witnessed the death of another individual of the same detested class. The people resolved to

extend no mercy to such vile traitors, regarding them as enemies to humanity, whose existence was a continual danger to the community. At this period the frequent requisitions made for the different camps pressed rather heavily on the resources of the townspeople, but the majority of them were not unwilling to suffer some loss of property in providing for the wants of the brave men who perilled life and liberty for the common cause. To force compliance from the more selfish and griping, the threat of burning their houses was made use of by the insurgents, and always with the desired effect. Things went off quietly in Wexford, and were it not for the occasional arrival of parties of the warlike peasantry, the town would have enjoyed the most undisturbed tranquillity, and no one could suppose, from the peaceful aspect it presented, that a fierce war was raging outside its walls. It is not, however, to be supposed that crimes and outrages of various kinds were not perpetrated during this disturbed period.

Individuals of vile and base character are to be found in every class and in every county, and in times of civil commotion such persons do not fail to avail themselves of the opportunities then presented of indulging their evil propensities.

The existence of the class referred to in Wexford was but too plainly shown by the numerous robberies and other outrages that became frequent. The insurgent chiefs did their utmost to check these disgraceful proceedings, and such of the depredators as were caught suffered condign punishment. In extenuation of the offence of these marauders, it is but fair to say that many of them had been totally ruined by the forays headed by Hunter Gowan, Hawtrey White, Archibald Hamilton Jacob, and other magistrates of the same class. As the latter still pursued their course of crime and outrage, the popular assembly thought it necessary to issue the following proclamation:—

*“Proclamation of the People of the County of Wexford.*

“Whereas, it stands manifestly notorious that James Boyd, Hawtrey White, Hunter Gowan, and Archibald Hamilton Jacob, late magistrates of this county, have committed the most horrid acts of cruelty, violence, and oppression against our peaceable and well-disposed countrymen. Now we, the people, associated and united for the purpose of procuring



our just rights, and being determined to protect the persons and properties of all religious persuasions who have not oppressed us, and are willing to join with heart and hand our glorious cause, as well as to show our marked disapprobation and horror of the crimes of the above delinquents, do call on our countrymen at large to use every exertion in their power to apprehend the bodies of the aforesaid James Boyd, Hawtrey White, Hunter Gowan, and Archibald Hamilton Jacob, and to secure and convey them to the gaol of Wexford, to be brought before the tribunal of the people. Done at Wexford this 9th day of June, 1798. 'God save the people.' "

To illustrate the good feeling that existed among the Catholic population of Wexford and their desire to conciliate their Protestant fellow-townsmen, we may mention the following event:—The crowded state of the gaol having caused the disease known as gaol fever to break out therein, the Protestants suggested that their own church should be used for the accommodations of the sick; but to this proposal the Catholics firmly refused to give their assent, and eventually a sloop was fitted up in the harbor for the purpose.

An incident now happily occurred to disturb for a brief space the calm which reigned in Wexford, and throw the populace into a state of violent excitement. It fell among the slumbering passions of the people like a lighted brand thrown into a powder magazine, and produced a similar explosion. The occasion of this popular ferment was the discovery of a pitch-cap in Wexford barracks, together with a commission for the establishment of an Orange lodge. This double discovery produced a fearful tumult. The horrid instrument of torture was inseparably united in the minds of the people with Lord Kingsborough, who was accredited with being its inventor. Breathing vengeance, a curious crowd hurried to his lodgings, with the ugly object that recalled so many revolting scenes elevated on the point of a pike, resolved to make him experience in his own person the torture he had designed for others. But Kingsborough's aristocratic friends stepped between him and the enraged populace. It shocked the genteely-constituted minds of these persons that the head which was destined to wear a coronet should be crowned with such an ungraceful head-dress as a pitch-cap. So persuasively did the gentlemen in question plead in favor of the prisoner, that the people, whose anger rarely proved unappeasable, at



length relented in their purpose of putting him to the torture. They, however, insisted that he should be conveyed without delay to the sloop and kept prisoner there. This demand being complied with, they dispersed. Next day Kingsborough's friends had the sloop condemned as unfit for the purpose to which it had been designed, and the prisoner was brought back to his former lodging. There is little doubt that Lord Kingsborough would have been put to death by the people could they have procured evidence of the cruelties he had practised elsewhere; but, luckily for him, his crimes were committed at a distance from Wexford, and in the absence of witnesses, the justice of the people refused to inflict upon him the death he undoubtedly deserved.

Meantime, affairs in the county were hastening towards a crisis. On the 5th of June a messenger arrived in town from the camp at Gorey Hill, for the purpose of obtaining from the townspeople a supply of ammunition for their intended attack on Arklow. The latter gave, though not without great reluctance, one barrel out of three they had captured shortly before.

Soon after this event a despatch came from Vinegar Hill, urgently demanding a reinforcement of men from the town, as an attack of the royalists was apprehended on that camp. In compliance with this request a force of one hundred and twenty gunsmen, under Captain Murphy, marched out of the town on the 10th of June, and arrived the same night at the "Hill," where they remained till the 20th.

These men were distinguished for their good conduct, and their interposition put a stop to the executions that had been too frequent before their arrival; for lately the insurgents had adopted severe measures of retaliation, and for every one of their party put to death by the Orangemen, sacrificed one of their prisoners. It was, indeed, verging towards a war of extermination on both sides; on the Orange side it had, in truth, been such from the very outset; they had been but too faithful to their wicked oath. The rumors of excesses committed by the partisans of the Government reached Wexford, and excited no slight apprehension amongst the loyalist prisoners. They considered themselves in imminent danger of falling victims to the vengeful feeling such reports aroused among the people in whose power they were at present placed.

Popular hatred still burned against Lord Kingsborough

as the representative of Orangeism (a system that in the minds of the people embodied everything that is hateful and detestable in principle and practice), and manifested itself in such a way as to put that young nobleman in terror of his life. To arrest the evil that he feared from some sudden outburst of popular anger, Kingsborough wrote a letter to the Lord Lieutenant, in the name of his fellow-prisoners, in which he besought him to endeavor to procure better treatment for such insurgents as might be captured by the King's troops, as otherwise he and his fellow-captives had good reason to fear certain destruction.

However, this epistle did not reach its destination, for Captain Dixon, aware of its being despatched, rode on before the bearer, Lieutenant Burke, and induced the Enniscorthy insurgents to seize the messenger, and intercept the letter. The captain put no trust in the faith of Kingsborough, and suspected this messenger of being the bearer of more than the contents of the letter, viz, important information of the plans of his fellow-insurgents. Were it not for the emeutes evoked by the captain the town would have enjoyed almost complete tranquillity.

This rough sailor seems to have sworn undying enmity to the Orangemen, since magistrates of that faction unjustly (upon the evidence of a perjured informer) sentenced his relative, Rev. Mr. Dixon, to transportation. From that time forth he allowed no opportunity to pass of exciting against them the angry feelings of his followers.

During his brief reign as king of the mob the captain was wont almost daily to sally forth from the town at the head of an armed band, and pay domiciliary visits to the dwellings of the neighboring Orange gentry, with a view, as he alleged, of seeing that they were plotting nothing against the people—in fact, using against them their own tactics. In one of these excursions he entered the house of a certain Colonel Le Hunt, near the village of Castlebridge, where he alighted upon an object of whose use he was ignorant, or at least feigned to be so, and to which his excited imagination attributed a terrible significance. This object was nothing more or less than a fire-screen, bordered with orange-colored fringe, and painted with a grotesque representation of the heathen gods. The captain hastened back to town, which he entered on horseback, accompanied by his wife, Madge, likewise mounted, bear-

ing aloft the yet mysterious prize, whose nature and purpose he began to descant upon to the mob, that, as usual, thronged around him. He declared that the aforesaid grotesque figures signified nothing less than the tortures to be inflicted by Le Hunt and his fellow-Orangemen on the Catholics. This, and other appeals of the worthy captain, roused the multitude to a desire for instant vengeance on foes whose crimes were black enough to dispense with the addition of imaginary horrors.

The populace, inflamed by Dixon's address, rushed to the house where the unlucky owner of the fire-screen lodged, seized and marched him down to jail, preparatory to holding a trial on him and other obnoxious persons. The tumult was, however, at length appeased by some gifted speaker of the committee, who explained to the excited crowd the harmless nature of the object that had aroused their anger.

But the insurgents at Vinegar Hill were of fiercer and less relenting temper than those who abode in Wexford, and many unfortunates were there put to death as enemies to the popular cause. Nor did their vengeance confine itself within the limits of their own camp; for, on the 16th, they despatched a party of pikemen to the town, who, having seized upon four of the prisoners confined in jail, led them off with them to the "Hill," where they soon after suffered death.

Leaving the town of Wexford for a time, we now proceed to visit other scenes where events far more important are in progress.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE BATTLE OF ARKLOW—DEATH OF FATHER MICHAEL MURPHY.

The leaders of the insurgent army on Gorey Hill having decided to march forthwith to attack the royal troops, who had possessed themselves of Arklow, and having made every possible arrangement to carry their enterprise to a successful termination, issued orders to those who followed their standard to be ready to set out on the expedition. At about ten o'clock on the 7th of June they were in readiness to march. Of the twenty thousand men who composed the insurgent force on Gorey Hill, not more than two thousand were armed with firearms, many of which were out of order and of little use, gunsmiths not being at hand to repair them. Three thousand of their number, at the utmost, had pikes; the rest were forced to be content with scythes, pitchforks, and whatever rustic implements they could use as weapons of offence. However, the spirit that animated these men seemed to counterbalance their lack of the ordinary weapons used in waging war. They directed their march through the village of Coolgreney, where they halted for a short time to take some slight refreshment, and, after a march of about fourteen English miles, arrived in front of the enemy's position, whom they found well entrenched in preparation to receive them. The insurgents perceived a number of field-officers riding in front of their enemy's line of battle, but a volley from their sharpshooters soon compelled these gentlemen to retire behind their line. One of them having fallen under the fire, was carried off the field either killed or severely wounded.

The insurgent artillery, under Esmond Kyan, commenced the battle, and by the first well-directed volley dismounted one of the enemy's cannon. While Kyan kept up an effective fire from his few pieces of artillery, one division of the insurgent army corps filed to the right, and commenced a vigorous attack on the Fishery, where the royal troops were in great force, and having to cross an open field in front of the hostile entrenchment, suffered considerable loss from the enemy's fire. Being reinforced, however, by another corps, they made a determined assault on the position of their foes. The main



body of the insurgents had by this time arrived, and the battle became general; and after an obstinate defence, during which the insurgents were repeatedly charged by the regular troops and yeomanry, who on this occasion manifested unusual spirit, the latter were finally driven with great loss from their position. Nothing could withstand the terrible onset of the pikemen, who, regardless of the loss inflicted on them by their trained adversaries, continued the combat with the utmost bravery. Their chiefs proved themselves worthy to command such gallant men, and charged with dauntless courage at their head. Numbers of the insurgents fell, but the rest still pushed forward with dauntless determination, heroically resolved to conquer or perish.

General Needham, seeing his troops beginning to quail before the repeated and fierce onsets of their undisciplined foes, deemed it prudent to retreat before the mass of the pikemen came to aid their comrades, whose determined onslaught had already made such havoc in his ranks. He feared lest his troops might become utterly panic-stricken and imitate the disgraceful flight of Walpole's, the remnants of which corps, cowed by their recent defeat, now began to waver.

In vain the various corps of yeoman cavalry, who, as we have intimated, showed more spirit on this day than heretofore, charged furiously down upon the firm ranks of the pikemen. They were scattered like chaff before the wind, and finally retired utterly broken and discomfited. The first of the yeoman corps to charge the insurgent ranks was that called the Castletown; at their head rode Captain Thomas Knox Crogan, of Castletown House. This corps was also routed and its captain slain. Nor did the cavalry regiment of Ancient Britons, so infamously notorious for their cruelty, fare better—they also being forced to retire with severe loss. It was in repelling one of the cavalry charges that the insurgents lost one of their leaders, the Rev. Michael Murphy, who fell by a mortal wound in the fury of the strife.

While the battle continued to rage with such fierceness between the insurgent pikemen and the cavalry of the royalists, to the increasing disadvantage of the latter, Esmond Kyan maintained an artillery fight with his few pieces of ordnance against Skerret, the colonel of the Durham Fencibles, a cautious officer, who kept his men behind their entrench-



ments, and was content to return the rather feeble fire directed against his position by Kyan.

At last Kyan succeeded in driving the colonel from his position, and was proceeding to complete his success by a further effort, when, unfortunately, he was wounded severely by a cannon ball, which carried off a cork arm he wore, together with a piece of the stump to which it was attached. This most untimely accident to poor Kyan gave his opponent time to choose a new and better position, and strengthen himself therein. Thus Kyan lost his arm, and Skerret gained a reputation to which in truth he had little claim.

The position might have been easily taken by a vigorous charge of pikemen, but the simple, though valiant, peasants had formed altogether too high an estimate of the value of their artillery, and many of them were satisfied to stand idly by, absorbed in admiration of its thundering discharges. This battle in which such gallantry had been displayed by both sides had now lasted for four hours, with great slaughter, till, at length, the royalists began to give ground, and victory crowned the unparalleled bravery and determination of the insurgents. Their opponents gave way on all sides—completely beaten and borne down by the successive and resistless onsets of the pikemen.

It is true the Durham Fencibles still defended the second position, behind which they had securely ensconced themselves, and in comparative security beheld their routed comrades scattered far and wide over the field so long and so fiercely contested.

This victory so glorious for the insurgents was, however, dearly bought, for many of their most valued and trusted chiefs and hundreds of their gallant brethren lay stretched on the field, dead or severely wounded. Amongst those brave chiefs who were slain in the conflict was, as we have already mentioned, the Rev. Michael Murphy—a sad loss to the insurgent cause, for, in addition to the qualities that form a gallant chief, his priestly character made the people follow him with more courage into danger.

Michael Redmond, the leader of the men of Little Limbrick (a Wexford village), also received a mortal wound whilst leading his men into the town after driving the royalists out of the Fishery.

Now that victory had rewarded the efforts of the insur-

gents, and then routed enemies were in full retreat, it seems almost incredible that the victors should have neglected to secure for themselves the fruits of their dearly-bought success, and retire without pursuing the enemy, whom they might easily have made prisoners, and have obtained possession of their arms and ammunition, of which they stood in such great need. Yet such was unhappily the fact. The insurgent army received orders to march back to Gorey Hill, leaving their routed foe to pursue his flight unmolested. Had the English soldiers been pursued as they retreated in panic and disorder, their total rout would have been inevitable; but the occasion was lost, and with it the fruits of a victory that cost the lives of so many brave men.

The insurgents on their march to Gorey carried some hundreds of their wounded comrades with them, leaving, unfortunately, many others on the field, who were slaughtered without mercy by the enemy on their return. Not only did these wretches murder the unhappy and defenceless wounded, but they mangled the senseless remains of those whom death might have protected from all but the vengeance of fiends.

Imagination sickens at the contemplation of the horrible deeds perpetrated by the Ancient Britons, who, having fearfully mangled the remains of the Rev. Michael Murphy, tore out his heart, roasted it and ate it.

Does history record another so fiendish deed of the soldiers of any country?

Thus ended the battle of Arklow, glorious for the bravery displayed therein, but unfortunate for the unaccountable neglect by which its fruits were lost.

The following is the shamelessly mendacious account given of this action in the "Official Bulletin," Dublin, June 10, 1798:

"Accounts were received early this morning by Lieutenant-General Lake, from Major-General Needham at Arklow, stating that the rebels had in great force attacked his position in Arklow at six o'clock yesterday evening. They advanced in an irregular manner, and extending themselves for the purpose of turning his left flank, his rear and right flanks being strongly defended by the town and barrack of Arklow. Upon their endeavoring to enter the lower end of the town, they were attacked by the Fourth Dragoon Guards, Fifth Dragoons, and Ancient Britons, and completely defeated. All round the other points of the position they were

defeated with much slaughter. The loss of his Majesty's troops was trifling, and their behaviour highly gallant."

The substance of this despatch was furnished by General Needham to his military superior, Lake. Needham knew the art of forging despatches better than he did that of fighting insurgents; his brother officers esteemed him little better than a coward, and his retreat at Arklow would have been converted into a flight but for the firmness with which Skerret stood his ground.

To refute the false assertions contained in the above-given despatch, we need only cite the authors who have made mention of the affair in question. Sir Jonah Barrington says:—"The insurgents, dispirited by the fall of Father Murphy, advanced no further;—they began to retreat, but without precipitation; the royal army did not think it prudent to pursue." "The rebels ceased from combat as soon as darkness came, and retired unpursued towards Gorey."—Rev. Mr. Gordon. "The insurgents retreated when their ammunition was expended." Hay.

The insurgent army, on their return from Arklow, once more encamped on Gorey Hill, where they remained till the 10th, when they returned to Linbrick Hill. Meantime the country where the various battles we have attempted to describe were fought, continued to be the theatre where innumerable scenes of cruelty and bloodshed were exhibited. The yeomanry and military yet infested the country in small bands, taking care to avoid any place where the dreaded pikemen were in force, and wherever they went the shrieks of the tortured victims or the death-cry of some hapless wretch too surely announced their presence. Old men were slain, whose nerveless arms could not defend them, and whose white hairs might have moved the pity of less ruthless foes; and the wives, sisters, and daughters of the people far-famed for their purity, fell victims to the brutal lust of England's vile soldiery and foreign mercenaries.

The sons, brothers, and fathers of those unhappy victims stood on the hill-side or slept in the rude camp under the free air of heaven; but the patriot's sleep was haunted by the woeful vision of a desolated home, and the suffering of those who were dear to his heart; and can we wonder that, with a sense of these wrongs ever present in his mind, he swore the direst revenge on those who had wrought them?

Had the insurgents borne calmly such injuries and borne all retaliation, they had been more or less than human. They did in some instances retaliate, but we venture to affirm that never did a people so foully wronged, so ruthlessly trampled under the iron heel of military despotism, exhibit so many instances of merciful forgiveness to those they knew to be their mortal foes.

Owens, a Protestant minister, an Orangeman, and a magistrate, had long exercised his power in a most cruel way. This man fell into the power of the people, and though it was proved that he had put many innocent men to death, his life was spared, and his captors decided that as he had inflicted the torture of the pitch-cap on so many, it was just that he should have an opportunity of proving it himself—to this punishment he was accordingly subjected. The chivalrous spirit of the insurgent peasantry manifested itself by giving women an entire immunity from even the slightest injury. As an instance of this we may relate what occurred to the daughters of Hunter Gowan. These young ladies, who were so numerous as fifteen, being encountered on the road by a band of armed insurgents, were stopped and questioned as to who they were and whither they were going. They told both, and were dismissed unharmed, to appreciate, if they could, the chivalrous generosity of the brave peasants. It is, moreover, admitted even by the bitterest enemies of the gallant insurgents that during all the time they were masters of the county, no insult or injury was offered by them to any female, even the relatives of their most merciless foes—a fact that forms an admirable contrast to the brutal war waged against female honor by those who fought under the standards of a nation which boasts itself pre-eminently civilized and Christian.

Concerning this admirable trait in the character of the insurgent peasantry, as contrasted with the infamous conduct of the soldiery, Sir Jonah Barrington remarks:—"It is a singular fact that in all the ferocity of the conflict, the storming of towns and villages, women were uniformly respected by the insurgents. Though numerous ladies fell into their power, they never experienced any incivility or misconduct. But the foreign troops in our service (Hompesch's) not only brutally ill-treated, but occasionally shot gentlewomen. A very respectable married woman in Enniscorthy (Mrs.

Stringer, the wife of an attorney) was wantonly shot at her window by a yeoman in cold blood. The rebels (though her husband was a loyalist), a short time after, took some of those foreign soldiers prisoners and piked them all, as they told them, 'just to show them how to shoot ladies.' "

Nor were the officers, English or Irish, in the royal army a single pace behind those vile foreign mercenaries in the pursuit of such beast-like brutality. We cannot here more than allude to such infamy, of which abundant historical proof already exists. But it would scarcely be credited that so fearfully had the minds of the people been perverted by the frenzy of religious hatred, that a lady of fashion, on being told of the respect shown by the insurgents to the fair sex, merely remarked with an air of disgust, that it was owing to a want of gallantry in the "croppies."



Composed from the Book of Kells.





## CHAPTER X.

### POSITION OF INSURGENTS AND ROYALISTS—BATTLE OF FOOKES MILL.

Early on the morning of Saturday, the 16th, news was brought to the insurgent camp on Limbrick Hill that Generals Loftus and Dundas had quitted their camps at Tullow and Hacketstown, and were on their march from these places with the intention of making a combined attack on their position. On the receipt of this welcome news the camp on Limbrick Hill was broken up, and the insurgents were once more on their march to meet their foes. They reached Carnew without encountering an enemy; and thence they continued their march to Tinahely, where their advance guard came in view of a like body from the hostile army, whom they put to flight, making many prisoners. They also captured a great number of cattle which were in the possession of the enemy. The insurgents reached Mount Pleasant that night, where they encamped.

At an early hour next morning the united forces of Dundas and Loftus came in sight of the insurgents, drawn up in formidable array on Mount Pleasant. The good position occupied by the insurgents, and the appearance of military discipline they exhibited, considerably cooled the ardor the royalist officers had the day before manifested to encounter the "rebels." They had openly boasted that the "bloody croppy rebels" would fly on the appearance of such a formidable force as they commanded. But no sign of fear or inclination to fly was shown by the fierce array of warlike peasants. On the other hand, these pot-valiant generals, so ready to put rebels to flight over their cups, now that they had them present, did not seem over anxious to come to close quarters with them.

The English force came to a halt at a safe distance; and no doubt they then deemed it would be much safer to be out of sight altogether. The insurgents, burning to meet those despised foes, received with war-like ardor the command to advance, and charged at a quick pace down the hill in the direction of their enemy.

The latter did not choose to withstand their onset, but retired with great precipitation, leaving a large herd of cattle and a considerable quantity of provisions to be seized by their courageous foes. The cavalry of the royal army attempted to cover the rear of the retreating forces, but were unable to prevent the insurgents from making a number of prisoners. The royalist army continued to retreat before the insurgents till they reached a hill at a considerable distance, where they halted. While the main body of the royal troops was thus retreating from their dangerous proximity to their enemy's line, detached bodies from the insurgent army hung upon their rear, and gave occupation to the numerous corps of cavalry engaged in covering the retreat. Among the skirmishing parties from the insurgent forces, a force of two hundred Arklow men, under the command of Dennis Doyle, made a great figure; for, in addition to their possession of that brave spirit which animated the entire insurgent army, they had, by constant training, acquired a great promptitude in the execution of military manoeuvres, and bore themselves as steadily as veteran soldiers. Night at length fell over both armies and put an end to the pursuit. The tumult of the fight was succeeded by silence, and the triumphant insurgents retired to their camp on Mount Pleasant to seek the repose they so much needed. During the ensuing day the insurgents remained on Mount Pleasant, where intelligence reached them of the utter failure of the insurrection in Dublin and Kildare, and of the supposed immediate invasion of the country by Bonaparte. On the same day the chiefs held a council, in which the next steps to be taken were discussed. It was finally decided to endeavor to force the enemy to give battle. This they sought to do, as it was then known that the various English forces in the country were about to be concentrated for a combined attack on the great rendezvous and rallying place of the insurgents on Vinegar Hill. Accordingly, the insurgent army quitted their camp on Mount Pleasant, and took up a position on Kiltavan Hill, thus drawing near to the headquarters of Lieutenant-General Lake, at Gorey. But the English generals, with a large body of regular troops and yeomanry, remained stationed behind their barricades at Gorey, and refused to accept the challenge of the gallant band of Wexford and Wicklow peasants, who, seeing the evident reluctance of their enemy to engage them, advanced boldly

to the very walls of Gorey, where they found the King's troops drawn up in preparation for an attack. The few pieces of artillery the insurgents possessed were now brought to the front, and commenced to play on the enemy's lines.

The royal artillery replied with spirit to the insurgent's fire, and many men fell on both sides. The pikemen, who had hitherto been kept in reserve, now received orders to advance. This command they obeyed with their usual alacrity, and pushed rapidly forward to encounter the redcoats. The latter retreated slowly before the impetuous advance of the insurgents, who continued to pursue them till night put an end to the conflict. This engagement took place between the advance guards of both armies; for the main body of the insurgents yet remained on the hill, while that of the royalists kept behind their entrenchments at Gorey. While a part of the insurgent army was thus engaged, their comrades on the hill were busily discussing the contents of despatches which in the interim had arrived from the general-in-chief, which were to this effect:—that being unable to maintain his position before Ross, he was forced to fall back with his division to cover Wexford, and that he considered it expedient that the forces now on Killeavan Hill should forthwith set out for Vinegar Hill, in order to act in concert with his army. The wisdom of the proposed step being discussed among the chiefs, it was decided by the majority to abandon their present position, on the very evening that had witnessed the glorious success of a portion of their army in combat with a far more numerous force of the King's troops. That night the insurgents set out for Vinegar Hill, halting to repose at Ferns, well-nigh exhausted from excessive fatigue and want of food. On the next morning they resumed their march, proceeding slowly, in order to give time to some who had gone in quest of food to rejoin their corps. Great was the rejoicing in the English camp at Gorey when it was known that their dreaded foe had quitted their encampment and were retreating toward Vinegar Hill. Soon those English troops, whose cautious generals had hitherto kept them cooped behind intrenchments, which they had hardly hoped would protect them, issued from their shelter and forthwith commenced a vigorous pursuit. It would be vain to attempt a description of the enormities perpetrated by those worse than savage troops as they hung on the rear of the weary pikemen. Suffice it to say that in their

progress through the country everything of value they could lay hands on they plundered, every woman that fell into their hands they brutally violated, and every man they put to death. The insurgents, meantime, continued their retreat in good order, a rear-guard keeping the enemy at a distance. Their movements were, however, considerably impeded by the vast multitude of helpless women and children, who, flying in terror before the advance of the royal army, sought protection of their armed countrymen. Weary and exhausted, the latter at length arrived at the foot of Vinegar Hill just at nightfall, and encamped around it. A hundred fires, lighting up the dark night, made visible the great numbers that had sought protection in the vicinity of the army of the people.

The division of the insurgents under the command of Father Philip Roche was now encamped on Lacken Hill, an eminence situated between Ross and Enniscorthy, with the intention of making another attack on the former town. But to carry this intention into effect, the insurgents were sadly in need of arms and ammunition.

To obtain a supply of these they resolved to attack Borris House, the residence of Mr. Kavangh, which was known to contain a large quantity of the material of war. In this attack they failed, as they did in most others in which they had to fight enemies sheltered behind stone walls. The house in question was so strongly built that the fire of the howitzer the insurgents brought with them had no effect on its walls. This fortress-like mansion was defended by a party of the Donegal Militia. The attacking party carried on the assault with great determination till evening, when they desisted from it on perceiving the approach of Charles Asgill, at the head of an overpowering force. The baffled insurgents then returned to their encampment at Lacken Hill. There, on the morning of the 19th, one of the chiefs descried, by the aid of a glass, a considerable force of horse, foot and artillery marching towards them. When their general, the Rev. Philip Roche, was apprised of this, he gave orders to the small force under his command (then diminished to some four hundred men) to prepare for battle.

This command was, however, prevented from being carried into effect by Colonel T. Clooney, who considered it would be decidedly rash to hazard a battle with such inferior force as the insurgents possessed. "Acting on this opinion, he desired



the men to draw up two deep on the hill-side, fronting their enemy, and, at the same time, placing their hats at the end of their pikes, to raise them above their heads, so as to deceive the enemy, by making their small force seem more numerous than in reality it was " They were, at the same moment, to raise a shout as if about to charge the advancing enemy. These orders were obeyed, and the stratagem succeeded. The advancing royalists halted, seemed to be thrown into confusion, extending their line, as if to prevent themselves from being outflanked by the insurgents, whom they supposed about to attack them in great force. While this confusion prevailed amongst the King's troops, the insurgents made a hasty retreat in the direction of Wexford, and, before the enemy were in readiness to pursue them, were at a safe distance.

Mr. Clooney admits that the number of the royal troops did not exceed that of the insurgents, but considered that as the latter had but a few rounds of ammunition for their muskets, and no cannon, an engagement could only end in defeat. He affirms that Father Roche, on being told of the enemy's approach, immediately issued orders for battle, without even inquiring what force he had to encounter.

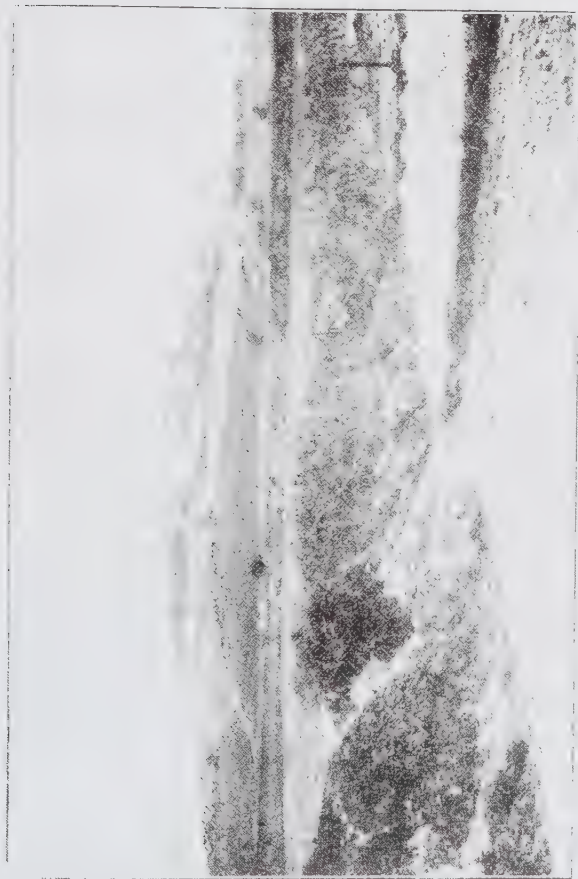
At a late hour that night the insurgents arrived at the encampment on the Three Rocks, considerably augmented in numbers on the way thither. They heard on their arrival that Sir John Moore, at the head of a large force, was encamped at Longraig, a village midway between Ross and Wexford. In consequence of this intelligence, a council of war was held to deliberate concerning the steps to be taken. Some officers suggested a night attack, but this was opposed by the majority, and it was finally resolved to set out at an early hour on the following morning. According, at daybreak next morning, the insurgents, being reinforced by a body of gunsmen, who had been summoned by express during the night from Vinegar Hill, set out to give battle to fifteen hundred chosen troops under the command of one of the bravest and most skillful generals in the English service. When the insurgents arrived at Goff's Bridge, within sight of the enemy, they halted, and the gunsmen, who had been mingling with pikemen during their hurried march, were now arrayed into a separate body—forming a line four deep, and amounting to about six hundred and fifty men. At this critical juncture, when the insurgents were about to engage their enemy, the chief, who has been al-

ready mentioned as having betrayed the cause at Ross, left the field at the head of his detachment, under pretence of taking up a position as would enable him to cut off the enemy's retreat in case of their being defeated. While Colonel Clooney was engaged in remonstrating with this recreant, General Roche, with his usual promptitude, issued orders to his men to advance towards the enemy, who were drawn up in a line of battle at Fooke's Mill.

During the battle which ensued the pikemen were forced to remain inactive, the nature of the ground chosen by the English generals rendering their advance impossible, and consequently the combat had to be maintained by the gunsmen. The latter continued to pour their fire upon the English line till their ammunition was exhausted; then perceiving two cavalry regiments, under Lord Dalhousie, approaching to reinforce the enemy, the insurgent general unwillingly ordered a retreat.

No attempt was made to molest the insurgents, who retired from the contest slowly and in good order, bringing with them five out of the six small pieces of cannon they had conveyed with them. There is little doubt that the failure of the insurgents' ammunition saved the English force from destruction, as in case of a retreat, they would have been charged by the resistless pikemen. The great loss, amounting to about five hundred men in killed and wounded on the side of the English, sufficiently accounts for the unmolested retreat of their enemy. In this action the loss of the insurgents did not amount to half that sustained by the royalists. The main body of the insurgents encamped on the Three Rocks, while a party belonging to the town took up their quarters there for the night.





#### VINEGAR HILL.

"And if for want of leaders  
We lost on Vinegar Hill,  
We're ready for another fight,  
And love old Ireland still."

## CHAPTER XI.

### ALARM OF THE ENGLISH GOVERNMENT—FAMOUS BATTLE OF VINEGAR HILL.

The English government, to render effectual whose vile design upon the legislative independence of Ireland the people had been goaded into this insurrection, now beginning to fear lest the continued and stubborn resistance of the Wexfordmen might arouse the rest of the country from their unaccountable apathy, resolved to crush the rebellion at once by pouring into the country such a force as would render resistance impossible. It seemed, in truth, from the vastness of England's military preparation, as if she were waging war against the united forces of some powerful and rival nation, not merely against the half-armed peasantry of but one, and that not the largest, of the thirty-two counties of Ireland.

"When we consider," says Mr. Teeling, "the number of troops engaged, the rank and distinction of the commanders, and the immense preparations for reducing a single county, we may form some idea of the importance that Government attached to the Wexford campaign. After so many severe conflicts between the British and the united troops, it was now evident that Wexford could only be reduced by an overwhelming force; and we find with others the following British officers employed in this service: Lieutenants-General Lake and Dundas, Majors-General Needham, Duff, Hunter, Loftus, Eustace, Johnson, Gascoyne, and Brigadiers-General Moore, Grose, etc. The opposition which this force encountered was evident proof that the Government had not overrated the courage of the foe."

From all quarters regiments were on the march to take part in a combined attack on the insurgent encampment.

In obedience to orders from the commander-in-chief, General Lake, the following generals put the troops under their command in motion, and hastened to occupy the positions assigned to them: General Dundas marched from Baltinglas to Hacketstown, there to form a junction with Major-General Loftus, who was to proceed thither from Tallow; both generals were then to advance with their combined forces to at-



tack the insurgents posted on Mount Pleasant. By orders from the general-in-chief they halted at Hackettstown to await the signal for attack. While the above-mentioned commanders halted at Hackettstown, Major-General Needham moved, on the 19th of June, from Arklow to Gorey, and on the ensuing day encamped on Oulart Hill. On the 19th, Major General Johnson and General Eustace, having driven the insurgents from Lacken Hill, proceeded to Bloomfield, where they encamped on the evening of the 20th. On the same evening Brigadier-General Moore took up position at Fooke's Mill, and Major-General Sir James Duff had marched from Newtownbarry, and joined General Loftus at Searawalsh.

It would be utterly impossible to describe the devastation caused by these various divisions of the English army as they marched to take up their different positions. Corps of auxiliary yeomen followed each of these divisions to render the ruin of the country more complete. On the 20th all the above-named generals had arrived at their appointed stations, where they remained to await further orders from Lieutenant-General Lake, who, with General Dundas, was posted at Solsborough. To aid the concentration of troops on land several men-of-war appeared off the coast, while gunboats blocked up the entrance of Wexford Harbor. As these troops, strong in number and discipline, and amply provided with every munition of war, pursued their way of blood and fire through the devastated country, the unfortunate inhabitants, old men, women, and children, who had hitherto sought an anxious and trembling refuge amidst their native fields, now driven even from this shelter, were forced to seek protection at the encampments where the national flag still waved in defiance to the foe. Many of these helpless and terrified fugitives directed their steps to the town of Wexford, of which their countrymen still held possession. Among the English generals at the time in Wexford, one alone is recorded to have shown that gracious quality of mercy, without which the soldier becomes a mere mercenary butcher; he endeavored to put a stop to the executions and half hangings, and the various tortures that had caused such unparalleled misery in Wexford.

The deep slumbers of the brave men who lay around Vinegar Hill were early broken by the random shots that announced the approach of the royal army.

The men who were aroused by such a stern call from their

much-needed rest and reminded of the perilous struggle before them, had proved themselves in many a hard fought combat the bravest of the brave, and now, in the crisis of their career there was no sign of dismay among them. They answered promptly to the call of their leaders, and each man betook himself without delay to the place assigned for the assemblage of the particular corps to which he belonged. The cheerful and inspiring summons of the drum and fife was, in the insurgent army, supplied by the human voice, and on hearing the name of his native parish shouted aloud, the rustic soldier quickly proceeded to join his comrades. The armies about to engage were nearly equal in numbers, but here all parity ceases. Twenty thousand brave peasants shouldered pike or musket around Vinegar Hill, while as many trained English soldiery were drawn up in a circle that nearly enclosed their line, prepared to give them battle.

Twenty thousand English troops, led by six chosen generals, and practiced in every military manoeuvre, furnished with the great arm of war, a formidable artillery, and aided by many corps of yeoman cavalry, might promise themselves an easy victory over enemies so unskillfully led and so poorly armed as the insurgents. Moreover, the royal troops were fresh from the repose of the camp, and vigorous as men should be who never suffered from the want of fitting food or drink.

At early dawn the English troops began to approach the insurgent position, and gradually to form a kind of circle around their foes encamped on the hill and its immediate vicinity. This circle was not, however, complete, for on the Wexford side of the hill it was open, and General Needham, whose division, it was afterwards affirmed, should have occupied the vacant space, was stationed in the rear to cover a possible retreat, for former defeats had made this at least possible to General-in-Chief Lake. The rattle of musketry that had roused the slumbering peasants to resume their arms became more frequent as the morning advanced, and soon the cannon was heard thundering from the various advancing bodies of the British army. When the powerful English artillery came within range its concentrated fire was directed against the summit of the hill, whereon the greater part of the insurgent force was massed, amongst whom it did considerable execution. To this destructive fire from so many large

pieces of artillery the few small guns, but two, in the possession of the insurgents made a feeble response of defiance, but lacked the skill of Esmond Kyan to direct its fire, which soon ceased altogether on the ammunition becoming exhausted.

"Even on Vinegar Hill," remarks Mr. Hay, "there were but two charges for cannon—one of which was fired against the army approaching from Solsborough, and the other a dismounted cannon posted at the Duffery Gate at Enniscorthy."

The ammunition for the smaller arms soon after failed, and the pike was now the only hope. All this while the insurgents had sustained a murderous fire from the English riflemen, who, finding a convenient shelter behind the various hedges and ditches in the vicinity of the hill, poured thence a terrible fire on their exposed enemies. Though their ammunition was all expended, the brave insurgents still continued the fight, and endeavored to drive their foes from behind their natural entrenchments. It was a fearful sight to behold the gallant pikemen charging up to the very mouths of the cannon with a desperate bravery that has never been surpassed, while their ranks were being terribly thinned by successive discharges of every species of deadly firearm. Concerning the position occupied, and the bravery displayed by the insurgents during this action, Sir Jonah Barrington makes the following observations:

"The peasantry had dug a slight ditch around the extent of the base of Vinegar Hill; they had a very few pieces of small, half-disabled cannon, some swivels, and not above two thousand firearms of all descriptions. But their situation was desperate, and General Lake considered that two thousand firearms in the hands of infuriated and courageous men, supported by a multitude of pikemen, might be equal to ten times the number under other circumstances.

"A great many women mingled with their relatives, and fought with fury; several were found dead amongst the men, who had fallen in crowds by the bursting of shells. . . . It was astonishing with what fortitude the peasantry, uncovered, stood the tremendous fire upon the four sides of their position; a stream of shells and grape was poured on the multitude; the leader encouraged them by exhortations, the women, by their cries, and every shell that broke amongst the crowd was followed by shouts of defiance. General Lake's horse was shot, many officers wounded, some killed, and a few





A PIKEMAN OF '98.

"Through Walpole's horse and Walpole's foot  
On Tubbercing's day,  
Depending on the long bright pike  
We cut our gory way."



gentlemen became visible during the heat of the battle. The troops advanced gradually but steadily up the hill; the peasantry kept up their fire, and maintained their ground; their cannon were nearly useless, their powder deficient, but they died fighting at their post."

It was a slaughter, not a fight, for to the ceaseless beating of the iron storm the hapless insurgents could not reply with even one defiant shot. While the body of insurgents on the hill carried on the contest with such heroic perseverance against such fearful odds, the division that obeyed the joint command of Mr. Barker and Father Kearns had likewise been hotly engaged with the enemy. Their position was at some distance beyond the Duffery Gate, and this they had successfully defended against the English, under General Johnson, on the preceding day. The attack on this position was renewed in the morning and continued till the retreat of their comrades from Vinegar Hill. Barker, whose experience in the French service we have already mentioned, showed in this action that he had profited by his past lessons in military art. He first posted a body of reserve on the bridge, where he also placed the only cannon he possessed, which was of small size, and mounted on a car.

He then formed the main body of his brave pikemen, stationing the gunsmen on either flank. Having made this disposition of his force, he charged desperately down on the enemy's line, and continued to hold them in check until they were too strongly reinforced, when he retreated to the bridge, which he held with dauntless determination, till the loss of his arm compelled him to quit the field. Father Kearns took his place, but was soon after severely wounded and carried from the fight.

Another priest named Clinch was slain in this action. He was engaged in an encounter with Lord Roden, whom he had wounded, when a trooper, coming up to the assistance of his officer, shot down his opponent.

This unequal struggle, which the insurgents maintained during so many hours against such terrible odds at length came to an end. Orders were issued by the insurgent leaders for a retreat in the direction of Wexford; the road to which town, as we have seen, was left open to them by the cautious policy of the English generals, who feared to drive their stubborn foes to desperation. The barbarous cruelties perpetrated

by the command of General Lake sufficiently evinced that prudence, and not mercy or any nobler motive, prompted him thus to leave retreat open to his hard-fighting foes. To the eternal disgrace of the army to which such a miscreant belonged, he caused the hospital that sheltered the sick and wounded to the insurgent army to be set on fire, and, horrible to relate, all the unfortunate inmates were burned to death in the flames that consumed the building. Moreover, he issued orders that all the wounded on the field of battle, as well as those discovered in the houses, would be put to immediate death. Indelibly branded is the nation whose flag is upheld by such merciless butchers as this disgrace to the noble profession of a soldier!

Barker, the wounded leader, was saved from the fate of the others in the same case, through the interference of some staff-officers who quartered themselves at his house; however, he was arrested by order of the general-in-chief, and conveyed to Wexford jail, there to wait his trial. He was soon after released from prison on account of ill health, at the intercession of his brother, and pending his trial managed to escape to France. The insurgent army, thus forced to retreat, were enabled to continue their march towards Wexford almost unmolested. The cavalry, as usual, being upon their rear, occasionally showed an inclination to assail their retreating enemy, but the rear-guard kept them in effectual check. But it fared far otherwise with the defenceless multitude, who had gathered round the insurgent camp on the fatal hill. To these no mercy was shown, they were inhumanly butchered by the pursuing yeomanry. These wretches displayed on this occasion, their usual thirst for blood, and their swords, so seldom reddened in fight, were now deeply dyed in the blood of unarmed fugitives. The number slain in battle on that day was small in comparison with the multitude of unarmed who fell by the swords of the victors.

With respect to the number who were slain on the insurgent side during the battle, Sir Jonah Barrington says: "Cavalry and mortars were brought to force their line, and even against such an attack they made a long and desperate resistance, and retreated from that large and disciplined army with very little comparative loss." Surely, such a retreat was more glorious than many a victory.

When the insurgents arrived at Wexford they found it

already occupied by the division of their army which had retreated from Ross; and thus, after three weeks of almost incessant fighting, wherein thousands of brave men had fallen, the remnants of both divisions again met, less sanguine, indeed, than when first they parted, but still not hopeless for the future.

The insurgents were greatly aided in their retreat by a large force under General Edward Roche, who arrived too late to join in the combat at the hill, but in time to render his defeated comrades this important service. It was his force that covered the retreat. While the battle was yet raging at Vinegar Hill, the reports of the distant artillery were borne ominously to the ears of the inhabitants of the town of Wexford. At length they ceased, and soon after the news was brought that the royal forces had won the day, and were already on their march towards the town.



Composed from the Book of Kells.



## CHAPTER XII.

### RUMORS OF FRENCH INVASION—GREAT EXCITEMENT IN WEXFORD— EXECUTION OF PRISONERS ON THE BRIDGE

The rumors now rife of a French invasion increased the anxiety of the British Government in no small degree, for could the Wexford men prolong the contest till the arrival of a Gallic force to their aid, the result of their combined efforts might prove fatal to British dominion in Ireland.

To quell the insurrection before the arrival of such formidable auxiliaries was now the object towards the accomplishment of which all the vast resources of England were employed. Regiment after regiment came pouring into Wexford till the insurgents found themselves confronted with an overwhelming power.

It is computed that previous to the action at Vinegar Hill there was a force of fully 90,000 men collected in the county of Wexford, so that there were at the least three soldiers to every insurgent. These were fearful odds against the patriots, who, though entertaining but small hopes of ultimate success, determined, nevertheless, to maintain the struggle to the last extremity. Around Vinegar Hill they decided to assemble their dispersed forces, and accordingly from that post messengers were despatched in all directions to summon thither the insurgents who were still in arms. In this emergency the dismayed and perplexed inhabitants of Wexford assembled together to consult concerning what measures they should adopt, but while they were yet engaged in deliberation, an imperious summons arrived from Vinegar Hill, commanding all the fighting men to be there at daybreak. Many of the townsmen set off that evening to join the chief rendezvous, while, to appease the insurgents in their vicinity, a party of sailors employed themselves in conveying to the Three Rocks the six small cannon taken from the Guinea cutter. On the evening of the 19th a band of Wexford gunmen returned to town from Vinegar Hill with imperative orders to bring out reinforcements to that camp. At daybreak on the ensuing day the drums beat, and all the armed inhabitants marched out, leaving none behind save those who formed the guard.



On the night preceding the departure of these men a band of seventy pikemen from the northern parts of the county had arrived in town, and were lodged in the barracks by Captain Dixon. Mr. Hay, who seemed the good angel of the Orangemen—while the captain might be termed their evil genius—suspected that the latter entertained sinister designs with regard to his proteges, resolved, if possible, to thwart him in their accomplishment.

With seventy pikemen at his back Dixon might act the dictator in the town, and sacrifice those he deemed the enemies of his county. To prevent him from putting into execution such a sanguinary scheme, Mr. Hay mounted his horse, and rode off on the spur to the camp at the Three Rocks, to represent the matter to the chiefs of the insurgent army.

He succeeded, though not without great difficulty, in obtaining the aid he sought, in the shape of a party of 120 of his fellow-townsmen, who had a few days before joined the camp. However, four days elapsed before Mr. Hay could gain what he sought, and on his return found, to his dismay, the town thronged with armed insurgents.

This force had been collected in the country and brought in by General Edward Roche, preparatory to their proceeding to reinforce the camp at Vinegar Hill.

On the morning of the 20th, when General Roche desired to lead his body to the Hill, he found, to his great mortification, that they were unwilling to accompany him thither. They were led to adopt this course by the advice of Captain Dixon, who, having first aroused the spirit of vengeance in their breasts by a recital of their wrongs, represented to them that a fortunate chance being placed in their power, the chief inflictors of these evils, it would be folly to permit them to escape unpunished. Dixon urged this point with such artful eloquence that they determined to aid him in the execution of the sanguinary scheme he had long meditated. Mr. Hay thus describes the excitement of the multitude: "When the people were assembled, and when General Roche thought to lead them to an Enniscorthy, they peremptorily refused to proceed, representing Wexford, from the suggestions of Captain Dixon, as more vulnerable; wherefore, the General himself thought it more advisable to continue with this body of the people, now consisting chiefly of fugitives from the northern parts of the county.

"These were continually relating their misfortunes, the cruelties they suffered and the hardships they endured, to those with whom they took refuge; which roused and irritated the populace to such a pitch of fury as admits not of a description and of which none but an eye-witness can have an adequate idea.

"All entreaties and remonstrances to soothe or calm the exasperated multitude were in vain. However, continuing still on horseback, I endeavored to address, explain, excuse and expostulate, and in the course of these attempts many pikes were raised against me, and several guns and pistols cocked and pointed at me and vengeance vowed against me as an Orangeman; that I had never attended their camps or I would be a judge of their miseries by a view of general desolation. One man would roar out that I had not been flogged as he had been; another pathetically related that his house had been burned; and that he had been driven to beggary with his whole family, and that he would have the death of the person that injured him; a third lamented the death of his father, another that of a brother; others of their children; and the appeal was made to me to decide on all their various sufferings and misfortunes, while they perseveringly declared they only wanted to be avenged of those who had actually done them wrong, and I was asked, if similarly circumstanced, would I not take revenge for such injuries as theirs."

Mr. Hay then implored them to grant the Orangemen at least a trial, but was answered by the universal cry, "What trial did we or our friends and relations obtain when some were hanged or shot and others whipped or otherwise tortured, our houses and property burned and destroyed and ourselves hunted like mad dogs?"

At length the people yielded to the entreaties of Mr. Hay and others and consented to grant the prisoners a trial. A tribunal of seven men was constituted to determine their sentence. Of this number four proved favorable to mercy and could not be brought to alter their decision by the arguments or threats of Captain Dixon. The latter in despair of gaining their acquiescence, was on the point of yielding when aid came to him from an unexpected quarter.

Two Orangemen named Jackson and O'Connor came forward and proffered their testimony as informers against the prisoners.

Dixon was now triumphant. The news of an event which favored their views was soon spread abroad among the angry multitude, and a demand was heard for the instant execution of such as should be found guilty on the strength of the lately-found testimony.

Mr Hay and his fellow-intercessors retired from the scene, and the bloody tragedy began. The first who suffered was a man named Matthewson, who was shot outside the prison door. A batch of eighteen unfortunates was then conducted to the bridge at the request of Dixon, he himself flanked on either side by an informer, heading the horrid procession. The manner of their trial was as follows: Placed on their knees on the bridge, they were confronted with the two informers, who gave their evidence against them; if the alleged crime was considered deserving of death, before the sentence was pronounced by Dixon, it was asked of the people who thronged around did they know of any good action that might be thought sufficient to counterbalance their crimes and entitle them to mercy.

Several of the prisoners found an intercessor among the spectators, and were thus snatched from death. But in case no such intercessor came forward, the death-signal was given by the judge, and the condemned was instantly piked.

The bodies were then thrown over the railing of the bridge into the river, nothing being taken off the person, for the object of the insurgents was vengeance, not robbery. This terrible tragedy went on for some time uninterrupted, till a Mr. Kellet, on being brought before the summary tribunal, bethought him in his extremity of summoning to his aid the parish priest of the town, Rev. Father Currin. This was the first intimation the reverend gentleman had of what was going on. He came running to the bridge in time to interpose between the person who had summoned him and a bloody death. The pikes of the executioners were uplifted to be again reddened with the blood of another victim, when the minister of peace came upon the scene, where angry and revengeful passions had full sway, and Christian men had forgotten, in the remembrance of their dreadful wrongs, the most sublime of the Redeemer's precepts—forgiveness of injuries. The good priest threw himself upon his knees beside the intended victim, and implored the people who stood around to join in prayer. Many of them yielded to this entreaty, and

knelt down. Then in solemn and fervent tones he prayed the Almighty Judge to show hereafter the same mercy to the people as they would show to the prisoners. This produced a deep impression on many of them. Mr. Kellet's life was spared, but the trials were resumed, and others whose guilt was more evident were put to death. A new intercessor soon after appeared. This was Mr. Esmond Kyan, who, though suffering from a severe wound received at the battle of New Ross, had risen from his sick bed, and caused himself to be borne on a litter to the spot. He added his entreaties to those of Father Currin, and at length the slaughter ceased. In all thirty-six persons fell victims to popular vengeance. Referring to the humane exertions of Father Currin and Mr. Kyan on this occasion, a Protestant gentleman afterwards remarked: "I have heard of hundreds of Catholics who risked their lives to save those of Protestants, but not of one Protestant who encountered any danger to save the lives of Catholics."

On the same evening, about eight o'clock, General Roche marched off with his men towards Vinegar Hill, but too late to form a junction with the insurgents assembled there, for the hill was already surrounded by the English troops. On the 21st the engagement at Vinegar Hill took place, and the thunder of the English artillery was distinctly heard in Wexford, warning the inhabitants to provide for their safety, for little hope was entertained by them that the scale of victory would incline in favor of the insurgents. At an early hour on the same day Lord Kingsborough sent for Mr. Hay to concert measures for the safety of the town.

The drums were beaten to assemble the inhabitants. They met at the house of Captain Keough, and there decided to send a deputation to each of the three royal generals, who, with their divisions, were now approaching Wexford.

One of these had arrived at Oulart, another was posted at Enniscorthy, while a third had arrived at the Three Rocks. It was also decided at the meeting in question to appoint Lord Kingsborough military governor of the town, and to reinstate Dr. Jacob as mayor. Lord Kingsborough having received the sword which Captain Keough reluctantly resigned, proceeded to write off despatches to the different British commanders. These despatches ran as follows:

"That the town of Wexford had surrendered to him, and



in consequence of the behavior of those in the town during the rebellion, they should all be protected in person and property, murderers excepted, and those who instigated others to commit murder; hoping that these terms might be ratified, as he had pledged his honor in the most solemn manner to have these terms fulfilled on the town being surrendered to him, the Wexford men not being concerned in the massacre, which was perpetrated by country people in their absence."

With the foregoing document another was forwarded from the people of Wexford. It was as follows:

"That Captain McManus shall proceed from Wexford towards Oulart, accompanied by Mr. Edward Hay, appointed by the inhabitants of all religious persuasions, to inform the officer commanding the king's troops that they are ready to deliver up the town of Wexford without opposition, to lay down their arms, and to return to their allegiance, provided that their persons and properties are guaranteed by the commanding officer: and that they will use every influence in their power to induce the people of the country at large to return to their allegiance; and these terms it is hoped Captain McManus will be able to procure.

"Signed by order of the inhabitants of Wexford.

"Matthew Keough.

"Wexford, June 21, 1798."

Captain Dixon and his friends were strongly opposed to the capitulation, but their opposition was overruled by the majority of the townspeople.

Mr. Hay and Captain McManus, who bore the despatch sent to Lieutenant-General Lake, were well received by that commander, who, however, declared that he did not consider himself bound by any promises made by Lord Kingsborough. He sent Mr. Hay back to the town with his answer to their request. This reply was couched in the following severe terms:

"Lieutenant-General Lake cannot attend to any terms by rebels in arms against their sovereign. While they continue so he must use the force entrusted to him with the utmost energy for their destruction. To the deluded multitude he promises pardon on their delivering into his hands their leaders, surrendering their arms, and returning with sincerity to their allegiance.

Signed, G. Lake

"Enniscorthy, June 22, 1798."



Meantime the insurgents who had been defeated at Enniscorthy took their route along the eastern bank of the Slaney, crossing the bridge at Ferry-Carrig, and halting near the Three Rocks. The majority of them were unwilling that the town should be surrendered without having first obtained the same terms for themselves as had been conceded to the townspeople.

To obtain such terms they despatched three of their officers to bring Lord Kingsborough to their camp with the purpose of detaining him there as a hostage till what they required was granted, and it was not till the latter had made the most solemn promises of the terms in question being conceded that the insurgent officers quitted the town and returned to their camp. The solemn promises made by Lord Kingsborough induced many of the insurgent chiefs to remain in Wexford—an ill-judged step, as the sequel proved. To prevent the capitulation being affected, and to put an end to all negotiations, a man of Dixon's party, named Timothy Whelan, shot Ensign Harman while on his way with a despatch to General Moore. The same person also attempted to shoot Lord Kingsborough, but his pistol missed fire, and Kingsborough had the good fortune to escape on this occasion from the fury of an individual, as he had on the former the vengeance of an angry multitude. Dreading the well-known severity of General Lake, the inhabitants of Wexford, while he was yet on his way thither, surrendered the town to General Moore. It was fortunate they did so, for the latter, like most really brave men, was of a merciful disposition, and averse to shedding blood save in the field of battle. The gallant and humane officer in question proved himself at this juncture not undeserving of his high reputation.

He issued orders that none of the inhabitants should be put to death or in any way injured; and fearing lest his troops, in the excitement of their triumphant entry, might proceed to sack the town, which they had threatened to do, he detained them on Windmill-Hill till their fury had abated. But he could not restrain the treacherous and sanguinary yeomen, parties of whom stole into the town, and proceeding to the hospital, wherein lay one hundred and sixty wounded insurgents, set it on fire, the unfortunate and helpless inmates perishing in the flames.

On the 22nd General Lake marched out from Enniscorthy

for Wexford, but, on arriving near the town, had the mortification of finding that it had been already surrendered to General Moore.

Lake was a second Cromwell in his relentless cruelty towards the vanquished, but without a spark of the military genius which crowned that renowned regicide with unfading though blood-dyed laurels.



Sculpture on Window: Cathedral Church, Glendalough: Beranger, 1779.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE RETREAT FROM VINEGAR HILL.—FATHER ROCHE GOES ON A FATAL MISSION—THE BRUTAL HESSIANS.

We have hitherto seen the insurgents victorious in almost every encounter, but we must now follow them in their more unpropitious fortunes, and behold how these brave men struggled, amidst ever accumulating difficulties, to prolong the unequal contest. While negotiations were being still carried on between the people of Wexford town and the English commanders, the insurgent forces, greatly lessened in numbers, marched out in two divisions, taking different routes. The Three Rocks were once more the scene of the insurgent encampment. On these heights were assembled some two thousand men, under the command of Father John Murphy, who still, with dauntless courage, upheld the flag he had first unfurled in the name of his oppressed country.

Thus while the timid sued for terms, and even brave men deserted the insurgent standard, under which they had so often marched to victory, thousands of true men and trusty leaders still kept the field, resolved never more to place their necks under the yoke of their English taskmasters.

The second division of the insurgent army, under their leaders, Kyan and Garret Byrne, had, on the same day, moved in the direction of Gorey. This division was considerably augmented by five thousand men under Edward Roche, who, having arrived too late to take part in the battle of Vinegar Hill, now bravely resolved to repair, if possible, the loss occasioned by his absence. To Father J. Murphy and Edward Roche, must be given the credit of rallying the insurgents dispersed through the town, and leading them forth once more to renew the contest. The division of the insurgent army that set out from Wexford on the evening of the 21st, halted but a short time at the Three Rocks, and then resumed their march in the direction of Sledah, a small village in the barony of Bantry. This force numbered in all about 3,000 men, who were chiefly from the northern parts of the county of Wexford, together with the brave Wicklow men, who had followed the national flag from the very outset. On the arrival of this

small force at Sleedah, the place chosen for the night's bivouac, a council of war was held to deliberate on their further proceedings. At this council were present Father John Murphy, Father P. Roche, Anthony Perry, and Edward Fitzgerald, with other leaders of less note. Here it was that the Rev. P. Roche declared his intention of proceeding to Wexford in the hope of obtaining terms from General Lake for himself and his comrades. He further proposed that they (the insurgents) should remain in their present position until they should hear of the terms he confidently hoped to obtain. His brother chiefs, however, did not share in these delusive expectations, and endeavored to dissuade him from this fatal project. Father John, who, with his usual keen perception, divined the probable result, did his utmost to prevail on his friend to remain, and not thus uselessly endanger his life in seeking mercy from men who had never shown it. But the arguments and entreaties of Father John and the rest were of no avail.

Before the day had dawned the unfortunate gentleman rode off alone toward Wexford, hopeful of finding in the breasts of the English generals that generous spirit of mercy to which his own manly heart had never been a stranger. As his friends foretold, he failed to accomplish his purpose, and fell a sacrifice to his fatal error.

On entering Wexford he was seized, dragged from his horse, kicked and buffeted in the most brutal manner, and thrown into prison, which he did not quit till he was led to execution. Of this clergyman, Mr. Gordon says: "Many Protestants owed their lives to his intercession." The same may be said with perfect truth of all the other priests who took an active part in the insurrection.

Father Philip Roche, who thus fell a victim to the spirit of the time, was a man of commanding stature and fine presence. His manners were bland and courteous, and he evinced during his short career as a military leader considerable talent. He was much lamented, and his death threw additional gloom over the cause in which he had been so conspicuous a leader. Hardly had poor Father Roche set out alone for Wexford than Father John gave orders to break up in the bivouac at Sleedah, and prepared to march in the direction of Fooke's Mill and Longraig. At the latter place the insurgents passed over the ground whereon the battle had

been recently fought between the force under Sir John Moore and that commanded by Father Roche. The unburied bodies of the slain still strewed the ground and made a ghastly scene for the eyes of the passing insurgents, who, however, did not halt, but pursued their march with unwearied activity. They encountered but little opposition on their way, the yeomen cavalry behaving with their usual cowardice, appearing at a distance, firing at the advancing column, and then betaking themselves to instant flight.

The insurgents were now marching by circuitous routs, with the intention of penetrating into the neighboring counties of Carlow and Kilkenny, and thus drawing the troops from Wexford in pursuit, and affording to their scattered and disheartened, but as yet, unsubdued comrades there, an opportunity of rallying for another and more successful effort. As they approached the boundary of the county, the opposition offered to their advance increased. The yeomanry appeared in larger bodies, and seemed more inclined to come to close quarters. At the village of Killane, the birth-place of the gallant Kelly, they opposed the further progress of the insurgents, but were soon put to flight and pursued till they reached the village of Kiledmond. At this place, being strongly reinforced, the yeoman resolved to make a stand, and, with a considerable force of infantry and cavalry, essayed to oppose the passage of the insurgents through the town, stationing themselves in the principal street. But they were unable to withstand the charge of the fierce pikemen, and fled after a brief resistance, setting fire beforehand to the village. The insurgents, by command of Father John, set fire to the barracks they had occupied. Having thus once more obtained a signal triumph over their enemies, the small force of insurgents proceeded a short distance beyond the village, and there bivouacked for the night. These brave men had been on the march since early morning, and during that time had traversed the entire county of Wexford, and crowned the day's labor by a successful battle.

On the following morning the insurgents were early astir, and received with warlike joy the intelligence that a regular force of cavalry and infantry was stationed at Goresbridge to oppose the passage of the Barrow. After such a meal as their scanty store could furnish, the men, at the command of their leaders, fell into marching order and set out in the direc-



tion of those new enemies. When they arrived within sight of the town, they were furiously charged by the Fourth Dragoon Guards, but they sustained the fierce onset of their assailants without flinching, and forced them to beat a hasty retreat. The defeated dragoons fell back on their infantry, the Wexford Militia, which corps received their insurgent countrymen with a volley of musketry, which, however, did not prove fatal to any. It is probable that the men were unwilling instruments in the hands of their taskmasters, and did not wish to take the lives of their own brethren. The conduct of their officer seems to confirm this view of their inclinations; for, while the force under his command maintained a feeble and apparently harmless fire, he seized the opportunity of mounting behind a dragoon and galloped off in the direction of Kilkenny without waiting the issue of the contest. Upon this his men ceased to fire, were surrounded, and made prisoners. The result of this affair gives us an idea of the feeling by which a great many of the militia regiments were animated, and how little reliance the British Government could place on them to serve as executioners of their fellow-countrymen. The majority, however, of the rank and file of the Wexford Militia were Catholics, whose sympathies were naturally with their fellow-countrymen and co-religionists. The insurgents having achieved this signal success, took possession of Goresbridge, where they obtained a quantity of flour. Thence they proceeded towards the ridge of Leinster, where they pitched their camp for the night. We regret to have to record a cruel deed of revenge perpetrated in the insurgent camp during the night, not, indeed, by the insurgents, but by some of the militia captured in the fight of the preceding day. It seems that amongst the prisoners taken were some Orangemen who had formerly treated with great cruelty their Catholic comrades, on the supposition of their being United Irishmen. These injured men, yielding to the fell spirit of revenge engendered by the memory of their wrongs, rose during the night and murdered their former tyrants. It was a cruel deed, and a lamentable instance of the sad fruits of the hateful Orange system. Before we further pursue the fortunes of these brave men, we will, for a brief while, retrace our steps to consider the condition of the inhabitants of Wexford. The regular troops and yeomanry emulated each other in diabolical cruelty; and, to deepen the horrors of the period, a brutal

horde of German mercenaries, called Hessians, were let loose on the people. Tradition has handed down amongst the people the name and deeds of this demon crew, and, for years after, the mere mention of these loathed and accursed Hessians was sufficient to call the indignant blood to the cheek of manhood, and to cast a pallor over that of a woman. In fact, so desolate had the country become that none save the old, decrepit, or the idiotic were to be encountered on the roads, in the houses, or fields. But neither the decrepitude of age, nor the deprivation of reason, that even amongst the fiercest and most savage children of nature throws a shield over utter helplessness, afforded any protection from the indiscriminate fury of England's swordsmen. We would fain pass over in silence the wrongs inflicted on helpless women. More merciful had it been for these vile mercenaries to have plunged their swords into the bosoms of those Irish maids and matrons than to have subjected them to their brutal appetites.



Sculpture on a Capital: Priest's House, Glendalough: Beranger, 1779.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers."



## CHAPTER XIV.

### ATTACK ON CASTLE COMER—PREACHERY OF THE COLLIERIES—CAPTURE OF FATHER JOHN.

Before dawn the insurgents set out for the village of Dunain, where they arrived about five in the morning. Here they were joined by a large body of colliers (from an extensive coal mine in the vicinity) armed with swords and pistols of an indifferent description. On arriving at Dunain they heard that four hundred men of the Waterford Militia had just quitted the village, and had gone in the direction of Castle-comer. Father John, whose energetic spirit ever urged him on to some new and perilous undertaking, now set out with a part of his force, including the lately-joined colliers, by a short route across the fields, to attack the English force at Castle-comer, leaving the rest, under another leader, to proceed to the same place by the less direct route of the high road. When the leader of the second division arrived within a short distance of the above-named town, he descried a body of about 200 English soldiers drawn up on the road along which his advance was directed. On seeing the approach of the insurgents, who came on at a running pace, these men raised aloft a white flag on the end of a bayonet, and appeared to desire a parley, evidently with the intention of surrendering. The insurgent chief, having halted his men, urged his horse on before them to ascertain the intention of the military, and on drawing nearer found they were a part of the Waterford Militia, cut off, by the unexpected and rapid advance of the insurgents, from their regiment, and desirous, on receiving suitable terms, of surrendering. The terms they sought were willingly granted by the insurgent leader, who returned toward his own men, riding at the head of the militia, one of whom held his horse's bridle.

But this pacific arrangement was unfortunately disconcerted by an untoward occurrence. One of the insurgents, who happened to be absent during the negotiation, suddenly emerged from the field upon the road, and seeing the strange position of his captain, naturally supposed him to be a prisoner, and without further reflection drove his pike into the

body of the soldier who held his rein, whereupon one of the militia officers, supposing this to be a part of a preconcerted plan, discharged the contents of his pistol at the insurgent chief, while another ordered his men to fire upon his followers. The leader's horse received the missile intended for his master, and fell. But the body of the insurgents advancing swiftly toward them, the soldiers threw away their arms and accoutrements, and betook themselves to a hasty flight.

Many of them were captured in the pursuit that ensued, and the few that reached Castlecomer, and rejoined their comrades there, found that they had fared but little better than themselves in the contest with the insurgents under Father John. When the second division arrived in Castlecomer, at the heels of the flying soldiery, they found the town already in possession of their comrades, with the exception of a large house, the mansion of Lady Anne Butler, into which the defeated troops had retreated, and from the numerous windows of which they now poured out a hot and deadly fire on those who were engaged in its siege.

The house, which had proved so fortunate a refuge for the king's troops, was lofty and very strongly built, and admirably adapted to the purpose which it at present served, and, indeed, could hardly be taken without the aid of battering cannon. In vain did the insurgents attempt to approach the house under the imperfect shelter of loads of hay and straw, the vigilant besieged shot the men who impelled the carts, and thus rendered their efforts futile. Finding their efforts unavailing to force an entrance under such a heavy fire, the insurgents at length resolved to drive the defenders from the house by setting it on fire, placing quantities of dried wood and other combustible matter at its rear. The house was soon on fire, and the insurgent chiefs, desirous to save the lives of the besieged, sent from amongst their prisoners a black servant, bearing terms to be granted in case they surrendered. The messenger in question, carrying a flag of truce, was admitted, and presently returned with the answer of the garrison, that they were willing to surrender, but only on condition of receiving a written protection from the chiefs. This protection was immediately despatched, but the black soon returned to say that the besieged now refused to surrender, as they had descried a large force of royal troops hastening to their assistance. This unexpected news received



immediate confirmation. Loud volleys of musketry, now heard coming from a hill outside the town, announced the approach of a new enemy. The force from which this firing proceeded being as yet at some distance, the insurgents found time to collect their scattered forces, and take up a favorable position on a rising ground that fronted the advancing enemy. This newly arrived foe proved to be General Sir Charles Asgill, who had marched with his division from Kilkenny to the aid of the royal troops in Castlecomer. The insurgents proceeded some distance outside the town, before coming in sight of the English force.

At length, having passed a large grove that lay on their right flank, they came in full view of Askill's force drawn up in a line of battle at no great distance. Strange to say, the insurgents were allowed to gain the position they desired, marching all the while with their right flank exposed to the enemy. While the insurgents were pushing rapidly onwards to gain their intended position in front of Asgill's force, a soldier was observed running at full speed towards them from the hostile ranks. He was fired on by those he had deserted, but had the good fortune to escape unhurt, and joined the insurgents with the welcome intelligence that many of his comrades but awaited an opportunity to desert the English standard. The insurgents at length attained the desired position, and awaited with their usual ardor the signal for attack. However, no sign of hostility was shown by their red-coated foes, from whom they had expected a very different reception. Great was their astonishment on beholding, a few moments later, the entire division of the English general—horse, foot, and artillery—wheel about and commence a rapid retreat toward Kilkenny, from whence they came on their abortive expedition. The tired insurgents continued their march through the apathetic population of Kilkenny, and encamped for the night in Queen's County, whose inhabitants seemed equally indifferent with those of Kilkenny, with unaccountable folly neglecting this grand opportunity, afforded the first time during centuries of slavery, of shaking off the yoke of their English masters. Seeing the unwillingness of these miserable people to join their ranks, the gallant Wexford men directed their march towards their native county, with the design of reuniting their force to that which had left the county town on the 21st of June to proceed in the direction of Wicklow. During

all this day they pursued their homeward march without encountering an enemy, and at a late hour in the evening arrived at the hill of Kilcomney, where they pitched their camp for the night. When the insurgents awoke on the ensuing morning from their sorely needed repose, they discovered that an act of unparalleled treachery had been perpetrated by the villainous colliers upon whose assistance they had so much relied. These treacherous allies foully deceived the brave men who had so confidently trusted them, and, while the latter were buried in sleep, had arisen and deserted them, plundering them of almost all their firearms, and leaving them, as far as was in their power, at the mercy of their numerous foes. Detestable treachery, the thought of which fills the heart with indignation that words fail to express! Surrounded on all sides by their cruel and merciless foes, foully plundered and betrayed by the infamous colliers, wearied and travel-worn, the grand spirit that had animated these heroic men from the outset still upheld them under their accumulating misfortune. But a fresh trial now awaited their courage and endurance. They ascertained from one of their scouts that the king's troops were gathering around them, advancing from different quarters.

This intelligence determined their leaders to lose no time in making a vigorous onset on some one or other of the approaching forces. They resolved to direct their attack against a body of troops stationed to defend the pass of Scollagh Gap. Accordingly, the insurgents, to the number of 4,000 men, the pikemen forming the main body, marching in columns, with as many gunsmen as they could muster on either flank, and in the rear, advanced up the pass. The soldiery stationed in the defile made but slight resistance to the furious onslaught of the pikemen, while the few insurgent gunsmen, sheltering themselves behind the rocks that project on either side, picked down every officer that was exposed to their deadly aim. Thus did the insurgents once more put to a disgraceful flight the trained mercenaries who marched under the proud flag of England. General Asgill, though in the vicinity with 4,000 regular troops, prudently shunned an encounter with the insurgents, finding, doubtless, far more congenial occupation in the cold-blooded butchery of the unfortunate and defenseless people of the district around Kilcomney. In this, as in the other battles fought by the insurgents of this division, they were possessed of no artillery. Now, alas!

to use the words of Miles Byrne, "a dismal cloud overcast all the hopes of the insurgents." Their most beloved and trusting chief was missing. He had planned the successful passage of Scollagh Gap, had been seen in the combat that ensued, but soon after mysteriously disappeared. The loss of Father John was irreparable, for he had been the soul of the enterprise. Wise to plan, and full of energy to execute, he had ever led his brave and devoted men to certain victory. But now, alas! he was to be seen no more at their head. This was the severest blow that adverse fortune had inflicted on these gallant patriots, who had hitherto continued to struggle with invincible courage against the most fearful odds. It was commonly believed amongst those who with such deep sorrow deplored his loss that, having ridden out to reconnoitre, he had been surprised by a party of the enemy, and slain while resisting capture. In whatever way he may have met his death, his loss inflicted a severe blow on the insurgent cause. Having, as we have seen, effected so gallantly the passage of Scollagh Gap, the insurgents halted to consult together on what steps were next to be taken. But the voice of their wisest and bravest leader was now unheard in their council. A difference of opinion as to their future route arose amongst them. Many were of opinion that the wood of Kilaughrim, some five miles distant, would be the best position, whilst others were desirous of proceeding in the direction of Wicklow, to join the division from which they had separated at Wexford town. They finally separated, to form two bodies, one party taking the direction of the Wicklow mountains, while the other sought the cover of Kilaughrim wood.



## CHAPTER XV.

### VENGEANCE FOR THE MURDER OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN—ROUT OF THE ORANGEMEN AT BALLYRACKEEN.

Monaseed, the birthplace of so many brave insurgents, lay directly on the route of those who moved in the direction of Wicklow; and there they made a brief stay, and heard with joy of the many splendid achievements of the gallant band they were in quest of. There, too, with feelings of anger and indignation too deep for utterance, they heard of the numberless deeds of inhuman cruelty perpetrated by the yeoman and the regular soldiery on the wounded and defenceless who had the misfortune to fall into their power. One authentic instance, selected from hundreds equally so, may suffice to afford some idea of the conduct of the loyalists of the period. Hunter Gowan, that incarnation of fiendish cruelty, being his Majesty's Justice of the Peace, and likewise captain of yeoman cavalry (consequently enjoying complete dominion over the property and lives of the mere Irish of the day), entered the house of a neighbor of his, named Patrick Bruslan—one of the bravest men in the insurgent army, and then lying ill of a wound—and inquired in the kindest terms about his health. The wife of the wounded man, of whom he had made these apparently friendly inquiries, conducted him, at his request, to her husband's bedside, that he might, as he said, "enjoy the pleasure of a chat with his old neighbor." Gowan stood at the bedside of the wounded insurgent, and stretched out his hand, as if in friendly greeting; but when the unsuspecting Bruslan grasped it, Gowan drew a pistol from his pocket with the disengaged hand, and shot him through the heart. Then, turning to depart, he said to the unfortunate widow he had just made, "You will now be saved the trouble of nursing your d—d Popish rebel husband." The insurgents soon quitted Monaseed, and, pursuing their march, had the good fortune to encounter at the White Heaps the division of their army with which they desired to affect a union. The chiefs of this division were Garret Byrne, Esmond Kyan, Edward Roche, and Nicholas Murphy. Many others, however, had fallen in the different combats that had taken place since their



departure from Wexford The united force bivouacked for the night at Ballyfad, where their number was augmented by the arrival of many who had quitted them to visit their families. Having now to narrate the history of that division of the insurgent force which quitted Wexford on the 21st to proceed in the direction of Wicklow, we must go back to the day of their departure. This division, as well as that which left the town about the same time under the command of Father J. Murphy, was considerably thinned by the delusive hopes created by the negotiations for peace at Wexford. However, at setting out on their march, they mustered about 7,000 men, armed in the usual way, and, as commonly happened, very much in want of ammunition for the few firearms they possessed. They proceeded on the first day as far as Peppard's Castle, where they rested for the night. On the ensuing morning the chiefs agreed to march towards the Wicklow mountains, and with their usual promptitude set out at once on their way thither. When in the vicinity of Gorey they alighted upon a horrible spectacle The road along which they marched was strewn with the dead and horribly mangled bodies of women and children. Many of these victims lay with their bowels stripped open, and presented to the eyes of their countrymen a ghastly spectacle, well calculated to fill them with mingled feeling of horror and compassion, and to rouse them to a determination to take the direst revenge on the cowardly perpetrators of such worse than savage barbarities. This massacre was occasioned by the insurgent's retreat from Vinegar Hill; for the English regular soldiery and their blood-thirsty associates, the Orangemen or yeomanry—the terms are synonymous—who had taken shelter within their entrenchments from the furious storm of insurgent warfare, on hearing of this unexpected step on the part of the insurgents, sailed out from their lurking-places, and immediately overran the country, flooding it with the blood of its unfortunate inhabitants, and practising every vile and inhuman cruelty that their inventive malice could suggest. Against this horde of murderous villains the vengeful insurgents now directed their arms. Changing for a time their route, they began to search for their scattered foes in the vicinity of Gorey. Many of the marauders were surprised in the houses of the peasantry in the very act of perpetrating their unspeakable villainies. Being caught red-handed, they

were slain on the spot. The alarm being spread through their dispersed forces, they rallied together in considerable numbers. They were routed after a brief resistance, and pursued to Gorey, where, attempting to make a stand, they were again signally defeated, and pursued with severe loss toward Arklow. Such of the insurgents as were mounted pursued the flying foe as far as Coolgreney, where many of them fell by the hands of the victorious avengers. While this pursuit was maintained by some detached parties of the insurgents, their main body halted at Gorey, awaiting the return of their absent comrades. On the return of these the entire column set out for Crogan Hill, at the foot of which they encamped for the night. The day on which the gallant insurgents so well avenged the terrible wrongs inflicted on their wives, mothers, and children has been called the "blood Friday," on account of the blood that was shed so abundantly, thereon.

The forces engaged in this massacre of the defenceless and unresisting were the ancient Britons—a Welsh regiment—in conjunction with many of the yeomanry corps of the county, whose chiefs were Hunter Gowan, Beaumont of Hyde Park, Ram of Gorey, the Earl of Mountnorres—names to be met with in the different narratives of those fearful times, when the demons of cruelty and bloodshed reigned supreme. Notwithstanding all these dreadful deeds of cruelty, of which their friends and relatives were the victims, be it here recorded to the honor of the valiant peasantry, so foully aspersed by the Orange historians, that though they had taken numbers of prisoners, none suffered death at their hands, for which humanity they got little credit. The insurgent army remained encamped on Croghan Mountain during this day, and employed themselves in gathering provisions and collecting ammunition, in both of which employments their success was but limited.

On the morning of the 25th of June the insurgents marched to Hacketstown, encountering on their way some corps of yeoman cavalry, whom they put to immediate flight. On drawing near the town, they found the English infantry drawn up in a field outside it, prepared to dispute their entrance. Upon this force, numbering about 200 men, the pikemen fell furiously, soon routing them, and leaving their captain (Hardy) dead upon the field, together with thirty of

his men. The insurgents now entered the town, and proceeded to attack the barracks, in which their discomfited foes had found refuge. Adjoining this building, but projecting farther into the street, stood a large malt-house, in which a party of armed loyalists had taken post for the purpose of aiding the royal troops. The front of the barracks and one side of the malt-house met and formed an angle, so that from one building a direct, and from the other a flanking fire could be poured upon the attacking party.

Both these buildings were of great strength, and in fact well nigh impregnable to assailants unprovided with artillery. The roof of the barracks was surrounded by a parapet, from behind which the besieged could take aim with almost perfect security. To obtain possession of them was the object to which the insurgents now bent all their energies. A low wall, running parallel to the front wall of the barracks, afforded a partial and insufficient shelter to the insurgent gunsmen, from behind which they could take aim at such of the loyalists as showed themselves at the windows of the malt-house, or over the parapet of the barracks. The insurgents, indeed, fought at great disadvantage, and under the galling fire of their well-sheltered foes numbers of them fell. But nothing could excel the heroic resolution and rare intrepidity they displayed in the course of this unwise attempt to take a fortified house without the aid of even a single piece of artillery. Their leaders in this affair were Garrett Byrne, Edward Fitzgerald, and Michael Reynolds. The latter gentleman signally distinguished himself during the action. The Wexfordians, accustomed as they were to see men bear themselves bravely in battle, were struck with admiration at the extraordinary coolness displayed by Reynolds, who exposed his person fearlessly on all occasions when it was necessary to direct the efforts of the assailants, not seeming to regard in the least the bullets that showered around him thick as hail. While the unequal contest was maintained by the gunsmen on both sides, a party of the insurgents endeavored to drive the enemy from their retreat by setting it on fire. This daring attempt they persevered in for several hours, one party after another advancing to the assault under such cover as feather beds and loads of straw fastened upon carts afforded. Many gallant men lost their lives in these useless efforts, for the bullets of the defenders reached them through and under

their insufficient cover. But undeterred by their heavy losses, they still carried on the desperate conflict, wreckless of life, and resolved to prevail or perish.

And, in truth, could the most persevering and dauntless resolution have effected the object they aimed at, it would have accomplished it. It was in advancing to one of the assaults referred to that young James Murphy, a nephew of Father Machael, lost his life. He was shot by one of the soldiers posted in the barracks, an excellent marksman, who had already slain several of the insurgents. But the death of this young man was soon after avenged by his friend Myles Doran, of Cloughmore, who brought down the sharp-shooting red-coat, with a well directed bullet.

Towards evening partial success seemed to reward the persevering intrepidity of the insurgents. The malt-house was abandoned by its loyalist defenders; but the fire from that building had scarce ceased when a fresh one was opened upon them from the house of the Rev. Mr. McGee, a Protestant clergyman, within which he, with several of his friends, had barricaded themselves, resolved to assist, with all their power, the besieged soldiery, and inflict a crushing defeat upon a common enemy.

But still the latter maintained the conflict with unabated fierceness, although the bodies of their dead and wounded comrades strewed the ground even more thickly as the hours passed on; nor did they desist from an enterprise they should never have attempted till darkness began to gather round the scene of desperate strife, and rendered its continuance impossible. During the night the insurgents withdrew from the place where so many precious lives had been unavailingly sacrificed, carrying with them their numerous wounded, but leaving upon the field of conflict the dead bodies of upwards of two hundred men. The total loss, in killed and wounded, on the side of the loyalists, did not amount to more than fifty of their entire number.

Next day the Irish army marched towards Croghan Hill—one of the Wicklow mountains. Here they remained unmolested by the enemy during the 27th and 28th of June. On the morning of the 29th, having resolved to attack the town of Carnew, they set out at an early hour on their march thither, halting for a short space at Monaseed, to obtain whatever refreshments the little village afforded. The insurgents had



quitted the village but a short time when it was entered by the celebrated cavalry regiment of Ancient Britons, followed by several corps of mounted yeomen—the latter desiring to act as executioners on the insurgents, whom they hoped soon to see defeated by their more warlike comrades. Amongst these infamous villains were the Earls of C— and M—, who were not ashamed to be the leaders of such a vile crew of cowardly cutthroats. These royalist forces, having learned at Monaseed that the insurgents complained of being extremely fatigued by their incessant marching, and, moreover, that their ammunition was quite exhausted, considered them a sure prey; and, elated by the hope of a complete victory, and supplied with such an amount of Dutch courage as their abundant potations at Monaseed could inspire, they rode on in pursuit of an enemy they had already, in imagination, vanquished. The regular cavalry led the advance, while their numerous yeomen allies followed, as was their wont, in the rear. They were now about a mile from Carnew, and were come to a place where the road was bounded by an old deerpark wall on the right, and on the left by a huge ditch, which ran in the midst of swampy ground. While riding at a hand gallop along the part of the road thus enclosed, they found that their further advance was arrested by a barricade formed of carts thrown across the road. This unexpected obstacle of course brought them to a dead halt. Before they had time to advance or retreat, their hitherto concealed foes rose suddenly from behind the ditch and wall we have described, and while the gunsmen poured a deliberate fire, every shot of which told, into their surprised and dismayed ranks, the more dreadful pikemen sprang forth from the same ambush, and were in an instant in their midst. We might pity these unfortunate dragoons had not the ferocious character of their crimes closed our hearts to all softer feelings. After a fight that lasted about half an hour, every man of the regiment that rode from Monaseed in all the pride of anticipated conquest, lay on the road either dead or dying. Thus perished the infamous cavalry regiment called Ancient Britons, receiving the retribution that falls on such red-handed sons of Cain sooner or later. But where were the burly yeomen who rode so gladly in their train to aid in an enterprise that promised such an abundant harvest of blood? These heroes remained on a rising ground at some distance to the right, while their accomplices in crime



underwent their bloody ordeal, without offering them the slightest aid, and when they saw that all was over gave spurs to their horses, and rode off in the greatest terror and dismay. The intelligence of the defeat and total destruction of the Ancient Britons at Ballyellis was carried rapidly over the entire country, causing great joy to the defenders of liberty, and striking terror into the hearts of tyrants and their instruments. It reached the English infantry on their way from Carnew to the scene of action, and caused them to retreat. They took refuge in a large malt-house, where they fortified themselves as best they could, and awaited the attack of their rapidly advancing foes. Here the scene that occurred at Hacketstown was re-enacted—insurgents' bravery wasting itself vainly on stone walls, and many brave men losing their lines in a fruitless essay to take a strongly-built, well-garrisoned house without artillery. The insurgent leaders, deeming it a useless sacrifice of life to continue the attack on the malt-house, drew their men off, and marched to Kilcavan Hill, where they remained for the night, greatly elated by the victory they had achieved. On this morning the insurgents shook off slumber at an early hour, and, before the sun had risen, were on their way to Shillelah, and, passing by that village, took post on Ballyrakeen Hill where they remained for the night.

July 1st.—This being a great day of anniversary with the Orangemen, these miserable traitors, whose dastardly triumphs are all founded on the humiliation of their country, whose curse and ruin they have ever been, resolved to signalize it by a furious and decisive onslaught on the few brave men who held aloft the national flag on Ballyrakeen Hill. Towards the hill in question came troops of the various corps of yeoman cavalry, while their infantry showed an unusual determination to come to close quarters with their ancient enemies. With equal ardor the Irish troops—for though the Orangemen were born in Ireland their constant and unnatural hatred of her cause deprives them of all right to be called Irishmen—rushed to meet their treacherous foes, charging down the slope of the hill in a firm phalanx of pikemen, intermingled and flanked by gunsmen, on their enemy's lines. In vain the hostile cavalry essayed to check by their furious charge that unyielding cohort of brothers who fought in the sacred cause of country; in vain the infantry poured the leaden hail into

their ranks. Every man in the insurgent ranks was a hero resolved to conquer or perish in the sacred cause. The insurgent force was now assailed on all sides by the cavalry, who, confiding in their numbers, and, perhaps anxious to retrieve their characters from the too well-merited stigma of cowardice, continued to attack with unwonted spirit. But this could make no impression on the ranks of their opponents, and they retired from each unsuccessful charge with diminished numbers. The gunsmen attached to the insurgent force remained to protect the flanks, answering with well-directed volleys the fire of the enemy's infantry. At length, after nearly an hour's fighting, victory again favored the brave insurgents. Hundreds of their foeman lay stretched upon the ground dead or severely wounded, while their comrades, cavalry and infantry, unable to maintain any longer the combat against such determined foes, took to flight in different directions—the cavalry galloping away at foxhunting speed, leaving their infantry to make the best retreat they could. The latter, being closely pursued by the pikemen, took refuge within the mansion of Captain Chamney, which stood at the foot of the hill, and from its safe shelter defied their victorious foes. Here again bravery that proved invincible in the field in fair fight was foiled when opposed by stone walls that sheltered a beaten foe. Seeing the uselessness of prolonging such an attack, the men at the command of their leaders desisted from it, and marched off in the direction of Wicklow Gap, having obtained by the day's victory a fair supply of firearms and ammunition. The fruits of many hard fought engagements having been lost to the insurgents by reason of their enemies taking refuge in large isolated, strongly-built mansions, it became evident to the leaders that to pursue their enterprise with any chance of success all such buildings must necessarily be destroyed. They came to this resolution with regret, but it was with them a question of life or death, and half-measures in such a position were simply madness. The insurgents pursued their route towards Wicklow Gap, marching all night, and, having arrived there on the following morning, pitched their camps, remaining during that day and the ensuing night.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### BURNING AN ENGLISH CAMP—ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF BALLYGULLEN—LAST STAND OF THE GALLANT WEXFORDMEN

On this day, July 2nd, at their usual early hour, the insurgents set out for Wicklow Gold Mines, with the design of burning the English camp, which was erected there in 1795. Having accomplished the desired feat, they returned by way of White Heaps, and took up a position at Ballyfad. The insurgents, notwithstanding their great losses, both in men and leaders, were still a numerous force, and fairly armed with the spoils of their many victories. At the same time, also, they were augmented by the force under Father Kearns, who had marched from Killaughrim Wood to join them. While the insurgent camp was pitched at Ballyfad, small parties were despatched in several directions to reconnoitre and bring back whatever intelligence they could obtain of the motions of the enemy. Towards dawn of the day some of the men who had been despatched on the previous evening on this important commission returned to report the advance of a formidable English force on their position. On the receipt of this intelligence orders were at once issued to quit their present position and take up a better one on one of the hills in their vicinity. While the chiefs of the Irish army were choosing this position the near approach of the English force was announced by a volley from their advanced guard, which passed over the heads of a similar detachment of the insurgents. A dense fog, which since dawn had covered all the country around, occasioned some confusion amongst them, preventing them from ascertaining the position of the enemy they knew to be near, and even causing some detachments to stray from the main body. The rising sun at length dispersed the fog, and shining forth in unobscured splendor on the insurgent army revealed to them, as they marched from the hill in the direction of Gorey, a large force of English horse, foot, and artillery following in their rear at about the distance of a mile. The force was commanded by Sir James Duff, who had followed in the track of his enemy, but was unwilling to begin the contest till he had received reinforce-

ments he expected from General Needham. The insurgents, however, seeing that Sir James evinced no inclination of attack, rightly concluded that he waited reinforcements, and in consequence judged it better to give him battle before they arrived. With this resolve, they advanced some two miles along the Gorey road, their cautious enemy all the while hanging on their rear. The insurgents now left the high road, along which they had hitherto directed their march, and proceeded by a narrow cross road that opened on their right and stretched towards the town of Ballygullen. When they had proceeded some distance along this new route, their gunsmen, in obedience to their leader's orders, left the ranks and stationed themselves in ambush behind the fences that bounded the narrow road, while the main body fell into fighting order and moved steadily onward towards Ballygullen, as if they intended to pursue their march. It was designed by this movement to draw the enemy's cavalry, who had not seen the execution of the stratagem, and were unaware of the position of the ambushed gunsmen, under the fire of the latter. This skilled plan succeeded. The English cavalry, seeing the main body of the pikemen pursuing their march, continued to follow them until they came to where the concealed gunsmen lay. Then the latter poured a close and destructive fire amongst them, killing a considerable number and causing the survivors to seek safety in instant flight. Had not the impatience of the insurgents caused them to deliver their fire rather prematurely, this great body of cavalry might have been utterly destroyed; as it was, their loss was so heavy that they made no appearance in the engagement that ensued. General Duff, on beholding the surprise and defeat of his cavalry, ordered his infantry to deploy into line and advance to meet their foes. A most sanguinary and fiercely-fought battle now ensued, in which both sides displayed the greatest bravery. The insurgent gunsmen maintained a deadly fire on the English ranks till their small supply of ammunition was entirely exhausted. It only then remained for the insurgent leaders to bring their redoubted pikemen into action. This they did with their usual gallant promptitude, directing their attack on the right flank of the opposing force. General Duff, seeing this manoeuvre and believing that his men had got quite enough from the gunsmen without encountering those fearful pikemen, gave orders to retreat in the direction



of Gorey. The insurgents, though victorious in this hard-fought engagement, which lasted two hours, lost great numbers of their men, and the regret caused by the loss of so many brave comrades was hardly counterbalanced by the knowledge that they had inflicted a far greater loss on their routed enemies. As soon as Duff's shattered forces had disappeared, they set out about collecting their wounded, and then quitted the scene of action and marched off towards a hill some half-mile distant therefrom. A council of war was held, to deliberate on their future course of action. At this council it was decided to divide their force rather than await united the combined and overpowering attack of the large English army at that time assembling in the county of Wexford from all parts of the three kingdoms.

Of this action Mr. Plowden says: "Upon the arrival of the insurgents at a place called Cranford, by others Ballygullen, they resolved to make resistance and await the approach of the troops, however numerous they might be, although their own force was then very considerably reduced. They resolutely maintained the conflict for an hour and a half with the utmost intrepidity; having repulsed the cavalry, and driven the artillerymen three times from their cannon, all performed by the gunsmen; for the pikemen, as on former occasions, never came into action; but fresh reinforcements of the army pouring in on all sides, they were obliged to give way, quitting the field of battle with little loss to themselves, and notwithstanding all their fatigue retreating with their usual agility and swiftness in different directions."

Mr. Plowden here admits that they defeated the force under General Duff, and only retreated on the approach of overwhelming reinforcements, which coincides with the accounts given by other authors.

The Wicklow men resolved to seek the shelter of their native mountains; some of them, however, choosing to remain with the Wexford men, who marched that same night for their former camping ground on the hill of Carrigrew. Though the battle of Ballygullen, or Cranford, may be said to have concluded the famous insurrection of 1798, as after that engagement none of much importance took place between the hostile forces, we think it right to follow to the end of their career those who took part in the heroic but unsuccessful struggle we have essayed to describe in the foregoing pages



The Wicklow men, after a brief repose, proceeded towards their proposed destination, passing Ferns and Carnew on their march.

When at length night set in it found them still pushing steadily onward; nor did they halt till they had left Kilpipe and Aughlin far behind and gained the security they sought among their native mountains.

In this retreat they long kept alive the scanty embers of a fire that had once burned with such bright and cheerful flames. Yet as they never could muster afterwards a sufficient force wherewith to encounter their foes in any considerable conflict, their adventurous and most daring exploits furnish matter suited rather for the romancist than the historian.

In Emmet's memoirs we find a highly interesting narrative of the adventures of the small but heroic band who so long maintained those strongholds of nature, their own "native hills," against the numerous forces of military despatched against them, thus rendering their name one of terror to the English garrison of the lowlands.

Hackett, Dwyer, Holt, and Garret Byrne were the chiefs of this small band, who never numbered more than two or three hundred men, but whose marvelous courage and activity rendered them formidable to their enemies.

The lone Glenmalur afforded them for a long while a comparatively safe retreat, from which, however, they were finally driven by the king's troops. Their most effective and inveterate enemies were the kilted Highlanders, whose former habits peculiarly fitted them for the effectual hunting down of the brave but unfortunate Wicklow mountaineers.

The Wexford men, with their few Wicklow adherents, once more, and for the last time, assembled on the Hill of Carrigrew, having as their leaders Father Kearns, Anthony Perry of Inch, and Garret Byrne of Ballymanus. These brave chiefs determined to march forthwith into the county of Kildare and join their forces to those which were assembled there under the leadership of William Aylmer. The desired junction effected, the entire force, numbering in all some five hundred men, set out towards Meath with a view of surprising Athlone.

On their march thither they arrived at the village of Clonard, where their progress was impeded by a galling fire

of musketry, directed against them from a fortified house occupied by Lieutenant Tyrrell and a corps of yeomanry under his command.

The insurgents might have passed on, but, irritated by the loss they sustained, they halted to besiege the house. While engaged in this unwise attempt they were warned of the near approach of large royalist reinforcements from Kinnegad and Mullingar. On receiving this intelligence they desisted from the siege and pursued their uninterrupted march towards the village of Castlecarberry, where they remained for the night.

This daring incursion of the Wexford insurgents into Kildare alarmed, while it enraged, the numerous loyalists of that and the adjoining counties. Corps of yeomanry, mounted and on foot, and detachments of regular troops, were soon mustering to hunt down the daring band. On the ensuing day the latter resumed their march, and passed into the county of Meath without receiving all the while any aid from the peasantry, while hotly pursued by a host of foes. The first body of pursuers to come up with them was the Limerick Militia, under Colonel Gough. The militia poured a destructive fire upon them, which, as their ammunition was spent, they were unable to return, and were consequently obliged to retreat with the loss of a few killed and many wounded.

It was soon after this contest, if such it can be called, that Father Kearns and Anthony Perry were made prisoners. Three days after, the Catholic priest and the Protestant gentleman being tried (and of course found guilty) by court-martial, were hanged on the same gallows at Edenderry. They died as cheerfully as they had fought heroically for the good old cause of fatherland. Though unsuccessful in this affair, the insurgents still kept together, and, crossing the River Boyne, entered the county Louth. But their pursuers pressed so closely upon them that the hunted Wexford men were at last forced to turn to bay. The place where they made their final stand was on the historic ground that lies between the Boyne and the town of Ardee. It was there that a large force of cavalry, under the command of Major-General Wemys and Brigadier-General Meyrick, charged down upon the diminished ranks of the outwearied and half-famished pikemen.

However, though wearied and outnumbered, they fought with desperate bravery, keeping their array, and repelling the furious and frequent charges of the English cavalry, whom they often forced to retire in confusion.

But the appearance at this juncture of a large body of infantry, accompanied by artillerymen, showed them the uselessness of further contest.

Seeing then already thinned ranks still further diminished by the discharges of musketry and artillery, they began slowly to retreat, with their faces towards the foe, towards a large bog that lay on their right.

Here they remained unpursued during the ensuing night; but, deeming it hopeless to protract the contest unaided as they were, they resolved to disperse and thus render their escape more easy. Before the morning dawned the greater number of the now hopeless insurgents began, with heavy hearts, their homeward journey—proceeding singly or by twos or threes, but a small body keeping together, crossed the Boyne and pushed on towards Dublin. However, they did not succeed in reaching the metropolis, for, arriving at Ballyboghil, near Swords, the disheartened fugitives were encountered and dispersed by a squadron of the Dumfries Dragoons.

The Rev. Mr. Gordon thus narrates the last desperate struggles that closed the military career of the Wexford insurgents: “Totally disappointed of their expected reinforcements in the county of Meath, which had been lately disturbed, they passed the Boyne near Dunleek by a rapid motion into the county of Louth. Assailed on the fourteenth by two divisions of troops between this river and the Ardee, they made a desperate stand; but overpowered on arrival of more force with artillery, they broke and fled into a bog. Hence a part of them took the road to Ardee and dispersed, but the main body repassed the Boyne and were advancing directly towards Dublin with their usual swiftness when they were overtaken in a hot pursuit by Captain Gordon, of the Dumfries Light Dragoons, at Ballyboghil, within seven miles of the capital. As they would have been surrounded with detachments from different quarters, they fled and finally dispersed, severally endeavoring by devious ways to reach their homes or places of concealment.”

But the people of Wexford paid dearly for their gallant

and persevering, tho' fruitless, effort to wrest their country from the iron grasp of a too powerful enemy.

For months they successfully withstood the military might of the British empire, defeating her ablest generals in fair fight, and flaunting the green flag in triumph on fields where the proud standard of England lay trampled in the dust. If the cause of freedom failed the fault was not theirs.

Had the rest of their countrymen awakened, even at the eleventh hour, Ireland had not now been an uncrowned nation.



Ornament on leather case of Book of Armagh.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers."









HENRY GRATTAN.

SECTION IV.

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# IN THE DAYS OF GRATTAN

BY

SIR JONAH BARRINGTON, LL D, K C

CONTAINING

DESCRIPTION OF IRELAND IN THE DAYS OF GRATTAN—SCENES IN  
THE IRISH PARLIAMENT—DECLARATION OF IRISH RIGHTS—  
THE VOLUNTEERS PROCLAIM THE INDEPENDENCE OF IRE-  
LAND—THE PASSING OF THE ACCURSED UNION—  
SKETCHES OF GRATTAN, FLOOD, CHARLE-  
MONT, CURRAN AND OTHERS



# IN THE DAYS OF GRATTAN.

BY SIR JONAH BARRINGTON, LL. D., K. C.

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## CHAPTER I.

### CAUSES OF IRELAND'S DEPRESSED CONDITION—IRELAND AROUSED BY AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

More than six centuries had passed away since Ireland had first acknowledged a subordinate connection with the English Monarchy—her voluntary but partial submission to the sceptres of Henry and of Richard had been construed by their successors into the right of conquest—and the same spirit of turbulence and discord which had generated the treachery and treasons of M'Morrough was carefully cultivated by every English potentate as the most effectual barrier against the struggles of a restless and semi-conquered people—and Ireland, helpless and distracted, groaned for ages in obscurity under the accumulated pressure of internal strife and external tyranny.

The apathy produced by this habitual oppression had long benumbed the best energies of Ireland—her national spirit, depressed by the heavy hand of arbitrary restraint, almost forgot its own existence; and the proudest language of her constitution could only boast that she was the annexed dependent of a greater and a freer country.

It was not until an advanced stage of the American revolt had attracted the attention of enlightened Europe to the first principles of civil liberty that Ireland began steadily to reflect on her own deprivations. Commerce and constitution had been withdrawn from her grasp, and the usurped supremacy of the British Parliament gave a death blow to every struggle of Irish independence.

But in whatever relative situation the two nations really stood, the same jealous and narrow principle might be perceived uniformly attending every measure enacted as to the Irish people. If at any time a cheering ray of commercial advantage chanced for a moment to illuminate the dreary



prospects of Ireland, the sordid spirit of monopoly instantly arose in England and rendered every effort to promote a beneficial trade or advance a rival manufacture vain and abortive

Commercial jealousy and arbitrary government united, therefore, to suppress every struggle of the Irish nation, and root up every seed of prosperity and civilization

Alarmed at the increasing population, the unsubdued spirit and the inexhaustible resources of that strong and fertile island, a dread of her growing power excited a fallacious jealousy of her future importance. In her timidity or her avarice England lost sight of her truest interests and of her nobler feelings, and kings, usurpers, and viceroys, as they respectively exercised the powers of government, all acted towards Ireland upon the same blind and arbitrary principles which they had imbibed from their education, or inherited from their predecessors.

This desperate policy, so repugnant to the attachment, and fatal to the repose of the two countries, excited the spirit of eternal warfare—an enthusiastic love of national independence sharpened the sword, and the zealots of religious fanaticism threw away the scabbard—the septs fought against each other, the English against all—the population was thinned, but the survivors became inveterate, and though the wars and the massacres of Elizabeth and of Cromwell, by depopulating, appeared to have subjugated the nation—the triumph was not glorious—and the conquest was not complete.

Direct persecution against principles only adds fuel to a conflagration—the persons of men may be coerced—but it is beyond the reach of human power to subdue the rooted, hereditary passions and prejudices of a persevering, ardent, and patriotic people—such a nation may be gained over by address, or seduced by dissimulation, but can never be reclaimed by force, or overcome by persecution—yet from the very first intercourse between the two countries that destructive system of force and of dissension, which so palpably led to the miseries of Ireland, had been sedulously cultivated and unremittingly persevered in.

Thus grievously oppressed and ruinously disunited, Ireland struggled often, but she struggled in vain; the weight of her chains was too heavy for the feebleness of her constitu-

tion, and every effort to enlarge her liberty only gave a new pretext to the conqueror to circumscribe it within a still narrower compass.

On the same false principle of government this oppressed nation was also systematically retained in a state of the utmost obscurity, and represented to the world as an insignificant and remote island, remarkable only for her turbulence and sterility; and so perfectly did this misrepresentation succeed that, while every republic and minor nation of Europe had become the theme of travelers, and the subject of historians, Ireland was visited only to be despised, and spoken of only to be calumniated. In truth, she is as yet but little known by the rest of Europe, and but partially even to the people of England. But when the extraordinary capabilities, the resources, and the powers of Ireland are fully developed an interest must arise in every breast which reflects on her misfortunes. It is time that the curtain, which has been so long interposed between Ireland and the rest of Europe, should be drawn aside forever, and a just judgment formed of the impolicy of measures which have been adopted nominally to govern but substantially to suppress her power and prosperity.

The position of Ireland upon the face of the globe peculiarly formed her for universal intercourse, and adapted her in every respect for legislative independence. Separated by a great sea from England—the Irish people, dissimilar in customs, more than equal in talent, and vastly superior in energy, possess an island about 900 miles in circumference; with a climate, for the general mildness of temperature and moderation of seasons, unrivalled in the universe—the parching heats, or piercing colds, the deep snows, the torrent, and the hurricane, which other countries so fatally experience, are here unknown. Though her great exposure to the spray of the Atlantic increases the humidity of the atmosphere, it adds to the fecundity of the soil and distinguishes her fertile fields by the productions of an almost perpetual vegetation.

The geographical situation of Ireland is not less favorable to commerce than her climate is to agriculture. Her position on the western extremity of Europe would enable her to intercept the trade of the new world from all other nations—the merchandise of London, of Bristol, and of Liverpool skirt her shores before it arrives at its own destination; and some

of the finest harbors in the world invite the inhabitants of this gifted island to accept the trade of India and form the emporium of Europe.

The internal and natural advantages of Ireland are great and inexhaustible. Rich mines are found in almost every quarter of the island, gold is discovered in the beds of streams, and washed from the sands of rivulets—the mountains are generally arable to their summits—the valleys exceed in fertility the most prolific soils of England—the rivulets, which flow along the declivities, adapt the country most peculiarly to the improvement of irrigation; and the bogs and mosses of Ireland, utterly unlike the fens and marshes of England, emit no damp or noxious exhalations, and give a plentiful and cheering fuel to the surrounding peasantry; or, when reclaimed, become the most luxurious pastures.

The population of Ireland is great and progressive. Above five millions of a brave and hearty race of men are seen scattered through the fields, or swarming in the villages—a vast redundancy of grain, and innumerable flocks and herds should furnish to them not only the source of trade, but every means of comfort.

Dublin, the second city of the British empire, though it yields in extent, yields not in architectural beauties to the metropolis of England. For some years *previous* to the Union its progress was excessive—the locality of the parliament—the constant residence of the nobility and commons—the magnificent establishments of the vice-regal court—the indefatigable hospitality of the people—and the increasing commerce of the port, altogether gave a brilliant prosperity to that splendid and luxurious capital.

Ireland, possessing the strongest features of a powerful state, though laboring under every disadvantage which a restricted commerce and a jealous ally could inflict upon her prosperity, might still have regarded with contempt the comparatively unequal resources and inferior powers of half the monarchies of Europe. Her insular situation—her great fertility—the character of her people—the amount of her revenues—and the extent of her population, gave her a decided superiority over other nations and rendered her crown, if accompanied by her affections, not only a brilliant but a most substantial ornament to the British empire.

However, though gifted and enriched by the hand of Nature, the fomented dissensions of her own natives had wedded Ireland to poverty and adapted her to subjugation—her innate capacities lay dormant and inactive—her dearest interests were forgotten by herself, or resisted by her ally; and the gifts and bounties of a favoring Providence, though lavished, were lost on a divided people.

By the paralyzing system thus adopted towards Ireland, she was at length reduced to the lowest ebb—her poverty and distresses, almost at their extent, were advancing fast to their final consummation—her commerce had almost ceased—her manufactures extinguished—her constitution withdrawn—the people desponding—while public and individual bankruptcy finished a picture of the deepest misery; and the year 1790 found Ireland almost everything but what such a country and such a people ought to have been.

This lamentable state of the Irish nation was not the result of any one distinct cause: a combination of depressing circumstances united to bear down every progressive effort of that injured people. Immured in a labyrinth of difficulties and embarrassments, no clew was found to lead them through the mazes of their prison; and, helpless and desponding, they sunk into a doze of torpid inactivity, while their humiliated and ineffectual parliaments, restrained by foreign and arbitrary laws, subjected to the dictation of the British Council, and obstructed in the performance of its constitutional functions, retained scarcely the shadow of an independent legislature.

A statute of Henry the Seventh of England, framed by his Attorney-General, Sir Edward Poyning, restrained the Irish Parliament from originating any law whatever, either in the Lords or Commons. Before any statute could be finally discussed, it was previously to be submitted to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and his Privy Council, for their consideration, who might at their pleasure reject it, or transmit it to England. If transmitted to England, the British Attorney General and Privy Council were invested with a power either to suppress it altogether or model it at their own will, and then return it to Ireland with permission to the Irish Parliament to pass it into a law, but without any alteration, though it frequently returned from England so changed as to retain hardly a trace of its original features, or a point of its original object.



Yet, as if this arbitrary law were insufficient to secure Great Britain from the effect of those rival advantages which Ireland might in process of time eventually acquire, and as if that counteracting power, with which England had invested herself by the law of Poyning, were unequal to the task of effectually suppressing all rivalry of the Irish people, and independence of the Irish Parliament; it was thought advisable by Great Britain to usurp a positive right to legislate for Ireland, without her own consent or the interference of her Parliament, and a law was accordingly enacted at Westminster, in the sixth year of the reign of George the First, by one sweeping clause of which England assumed a despotic power, and declared her inherent right to bind Ireland by every British statute, in which she should be expressly designated; and thus, by the authority of the British Council on the one hand, and the positive right assumed by the British Parliament upon the other, Ireland retained no more the attributes of an independent nation than a monarch, attended in a dungeon with all the state and trappings of royalty, and bound hand and foot in golden shackles, could be justly styled an independent potentate.

The effect of this tyrannical and ruinous system fell most heavily on the trade of Ireland. Its influence was experienced not merely by any particular branch of commerce, but in every stage of manufacture, of arts, of trade, and of agriculture. In every struggle of the Irish Parliament to promote the commerce or the manufactures of their country, the British monopolizers were perpetually victorious; and even the speculative jealousy of a manufacturing village of Great Britain was of sufficient weight to negative any measure, however beneficial to the general prosperity of the sister country.

The same jealousy and the same system which operated so fatally against the advancement of her commerce operated as strongly against the improvement of her constitution. England was well aware that the acquirement of an independent Parliament would be the sure forerunner of commercial liberty; and possessed of the means to counteract these objects, she seemed determined never to relax the strength of that power, by the despotic exercise of which Ireland had been so long continued in a state of thralldom.

But exclusive of these slavish restraints (the necessary



consequence of a dependent legislature) another system, not less adverse to the general prosperity of the whole island than repugnant to the principle of natural justice and of sound policy, had been long acted upon with every severity that bigotry could suggest, or intolerance could dictate.

The penal statutes, under the tyrannical pressure of which the Catholics had so long and so grievously labored, though in some instances softened down, still bore heavily upon four-fifths of the Irish population—a code which would have dishonored even the sanguinary pen of Drace, had inflicted every pain and penalty, every restriction and oppression under which a people could linger out a miserable existence. By these statutes the exercise of religion had been held a crime, the education of children a high misdemeanor—the son was encouraged to betray his father—the child rewarded for the ruin of his parent—the house of God declared a public nuisance—the officiating pastor proclaimed an outlaw—the acquirement of property absolutely prohibited—the exercise of trades restrained—plunder legalized in courts of law, and breach of trust rewarded in courts of equity—the Irish Catholic excluded from the possession of any office or occupation in the state, the law, the army, the navy, the municipal bodies, and the chartered corporations—and the mild doctrines of the Christian faith perverted, even in the pulpit, to the worst purposes of religious persecution.

Yet under this galling yoke the Irish for near eighty years remained tranquil and submissive. The ignorance, into which poverty and wretchedness had plunged that people, prevented them from perceiving the whole extent of the oppression; and these penal laws, while they operated as an insuperable bar to the advancement of the Catholic, deeply affected the general interest of the Protestant. The impoverished tenant—the needy landlord—the unenterprising merchant—the idle artisan—could all trace the origin of their wants to the enactment of these statutes. Profession was not permitted to engage the mind of youth, or education to cultivate his understanding. Dissolute habits, the certain result of idleness and illiterateness, were consequently making rapid progress in almost every class of society. The gentry were not exempt from the habits of the peasant; the spirit of industry took her flight altogether from the island; and, as the loss of commerce and constitution had no counteracting advantages, everything

combined to reduce Ireland to a state of the most general and unqualified depression.

It was about this period, when the short-sighted policy of the British Government had by its own arbitrary proceedings planted the seeds of that political philosophy, afterwards so fatal to the most powerful monarchies of Europe, that Ireland began to feel herself affected by the struggles of America. The spirit of independence had crossed the Atlantic, and the Irish people, awakened from a trance, beheld with anxiety the contest in which they now began to feel an interest. They regarded with admiration the exertions of a colony combating for the first principles of civil liberty, and giving to the world an instructive lesson of fortitude and perseverance.

Spread over a vast expanse of region, America, without wealth—without resources—without population—without fortresses—without allies—had everything to contend with, and everything to conquer. But freedom was her call, and as if she had been designated by Providence for an example to the universe of what even powerless states can achieve by enthusiasm and unanimity, her strength increased with her deprivations, and the firmness of one great and good man converted the feebleness of a colony into the power of an empire. The defeats of Washington augmented his armies—his wants and necessities called forth his intellect—while his wisdom, firmness, and moderation procured him powerful friends, and secured him ultimate victory. The strength of Great Britain at length yielded to the vigor of his mind, and the unflinching fortitude of his people; and Lord Cornwallis (the chosen instrument for oppressing heroic nations), by his defeat and his captivity, established the independence of America. The arrogance of England bowed its proud head to the shrine of liberty, and her favorite general led back the relics of his conquered army to commemorate in the mother country the impotence of her power and emancipation of her colonies.

While these great events were gradually proceeding towards their final completion, Ireland became every day a more anxious spectator of the arduous conflict—every incident in America began to communicate a sympathetic impulse to the Irish people—the moment was critical—the nation became enlightened—a patriotic ardor took possession of her whole frame, and before she had well considered the object of her

solicitude the spark of constitutional liberty had found its way into her bosom

The disposition of Ireland to avail herself of the circumstances of those times, so favorable to the attainment of her rights, now openly avowed itself. Her determination to claim her constitution from the British Government became unequivocal, and she began to assume the attitude and language of a nation "*entitled to independence.*" The sound of arms and the voice of freedom echoed from every quarter of the island, distinctions were forgotten, or disregarded; every rank, every religion alike caught the general feeling, but firmness and discretion characterized her proceedings—she gradually arose from torpor and obscurity—her native spirit drew aside the curtain that had so long concealed her from the world and exhibited an armed and animated people, claiming their natural rights and demanding their constitutional liberty.

When the dawn of political liberty begins to diffuse itself over a nation great and gifted characters suddenly spring up from amongst the people—animated by new subjects, their various talents and principles become developed—they interweave themselves with the events of their country, become inseparable from its misfortunes, or identified with its prosperity.

Ireland, at this era, possessed many men of superior capabilities—some distinguished by their pure attachment to constitutional liberty—others by their slavish deference to ruling powers and patronizing authorities. Among those whom the spirit of these times called forth to public notice was seen one of the most bold and energetic leaders of modern days, an anticipated knowledge of whose marked and restless character is a necessary preface to a recital of Irish recurrences, in which the effects of his passions will be everywhere traced, and the mischievous errors of his judgment be perceived and lamented.

This person was John Fitzgibbon, afterwards Earl of Clare—Attorney General and Lord High Chancellor of Ireland. His ascertained pedigree was short, though his name bespoke an early respectability. His grandfather was obscure—his father, intended for the profession of a Catholic pastor, but possessing a mind superior to the habits of monkish seclusion, procured himself to be called to the Irish bar, where

his talents raised him to the highest estimation and finally established him in fame and fortune.

John Fitzgibbon, the second son of this man, was called to the bar in 1772. Naturally dissipated, he for some time attended but little to the duties of his profession; but on the death of his elder brother and his father he found himself in possession of all those advantages which led him rapidly forward to the extremity of his objects. Considerable fortune—professional talents—extensive connections and undiminished confidence elevated him to those stations on which he afterwards appeared so conspicuously seated; while the historic eye, as it follows his career, perceives him lightly bounding over every obstacle which checked his course to that goal where all the trophies and thorns of power were collected for his reception.

In the Earl of Clare we find a man eminently gifted with talents adapted either for a blessing or a curse to the nation he inhabited; but early enveloped in high and dazzling authority, he lost his way and, considering his power as a victory, he ruled his country as a conquest, indiscriminate in his friendships—and implacable in his animosities—he carried to the grave all the passions of his childhood.

He hated powerful talents, because he feared them; and trampled on modest merit, because it was incapable of resistance. Authoritative and peremptory in his address; commanding, able, and arrogant in his language, a daring contempt for public opinion was the fatal principle which misguided his conduct, and Ireland became divided between the friends of his patronage—the slaves of his power—and the enemies of his tyranny.

His character had no medium, his manners no mediocrity—the example of his extremes was adopted by his intimates, and excited in those who knew him feelings either of warm attachment or of riveted aversion.

While he held the seals in Ireland he united a vigorous capacity with the most striking errors; as a judge, he collected facts with a rapid precision, and decided on them with a prompt asperity; but he hated precedent, and despised the highest judicial authorities, because they were not his own.

As a politician and a statesman, the character of Lord Clare is too well known, and its effects too generally experienced to be mistaken or misrepresented—the era of his



reign was the downfall of his country—his councils accelerated what his policy might have suppressed, and have marked the annals of Ireland with stains and miseries unequalled and indelible.

In council—rapid, peremptory, and overbearing—he regarded promptness of execution rather than discretion of arrangement, and piqued himself more on expertness of thought than sobriety of judgment. Through all the calamities of Ireland the mild voice of conciliation never escaped his lips; and when the torrent of civil war had subsided in his country he held out no olive to show that the deluge had receded. Acting upon a conviction that his power was but coexistent with the order of public establishments, and the tenure of his office limited to the continuance of administration, he supported both with less prudence and more desperation than sound policy or an enlightened mind should permit or dictate; his extravagant doctrines of religious intolerance created the most mischievous pretexts for his intemperance in upholding them; and, under color of defending the principles of one revolution, he had nearly plunged the nation into all the miseries of another.

His political conduct has been unaccounted uniform, but in detail it will be found to have been miserably inconsistent. In 1781 he took up arms to obtain a declaration of Irish independence; in 1800 he recommended the introduction of a military force to assist in its extinguishment; he proclaimed Ireland a free nation in 1783, and argued that it should be a province in 1799; in 1782 he called the acts of the British Legislature towards Ireland "*a daring usurpation on the rights of a free people*," and in 1800 he transferred Ireland to the usurper. On all occasions his ambition as despotically governed his politics as his reason invariably sunk before his prejudice.

Though he intrinsically hated a Legislative Union, his lust for power induced him to support it; the preservation of office overcame the impulse of conviction, and he strenuously supported that measure, after having openly avowed himself its enemy; its completion, however, blasted his hopes and hastened his dissolution. The restlessness of his habit, and the obtrusiveness of his disposition became insupportably embarrassing to the British cabinet—the danger of his talents as a minister, and the inadequacy of his judgment as a statesman



had been proved in Ireland; he had been a useful instrument in that country, but the same line of services which he performed in Ireland would have been ruinous to Great Britain, and Lord Clare was no longer consulted.

The union at length effected through his friends what Ireland could never accomplish through his enemies—his total overthrow. Unaccustomed to control, and unable to submit, he returned to his country, weary, drooping, and disappointed; regretting what he had done, yet miserable that he could do no more. His importance had expired with the Irish Parliament, his patronage ceased to supply food for his ambition, the mind and the body became too sympathetic for existence and he sunk into the grave, a conspicuous example of human talent and human frailty.

In his person he was about the middle size, slight, and not graceful, his eyes, large, dark, and penetrating, betrayed some of the boldest traits of his uncommon character; his countenance, though expressive and manly, yet discovered nothing which could deceive the physiognomist into an opinion of his magnanimity, or call forth a eulogium on his virtues.

During twenty momentous and eventful years the life of Lord Clare is in fact the history of Ireland—as in romance some puissant and doughty chieftain appears prominent in every feat of chivalry—the champion in every strife—the hero of every encounter, and, after a life of toil and of battle, falls surrounded by a host of foes, a victim to his own ambition and temerity.

Thus Earl Clare throughout those eventful periods will be seen bold, active and desperate, engaging fiercely in every important conflict of the Irish nation and at length, after having sacrificed his country to his passions and his ambition, endeavoring to atone for his errors by sacrificing himself.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE IRISH PARLIAMENT PREVIOUS TO 1779—CHARACTER OF THE IRISH PEASANT—THE PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC CLERGY COMPARED.

The habits of commerce and the pursuits of avarice had not, at this period, absorbed the spirit or contracted the intellect of the Irish people. That vigorous, comprehensive, and pathetic eloquence so peculiar to Ireland, which grasped at once the reason and the passions, still retained its ascendancy at the bar, and its pre-eminence in the Senate; and the Commons' House of Parliament, about the period of Lord Clare's first introduction into public notice, contained as much character, as much eloquence, and as much sincerity as any popular assembly since the most brilliant era of the Roman republic.

It might be reasonable to infer that a nation so long retained in the trammels of dependence, so habituated through successive generations, to control and to subjection would have lost much of its natural energy, and more of its national feeling. But, though the Irish Parliament, previous to 1799, in general manifested strong indications of a declining and a subservient body, yet, even after centuries of depression, when roused by the sting of accumulating usurpation, its latent spirit occasionally burst forth and should have convinced the British Government that though the flame of liberty may be smothered the spark is unextinguishable.

Although, by the operation of Poyning's Law, the parliamentary discussions were generally restricted to local subjects and domestic arrangements, yet constitutional questions of a vital tendency incidentally occurred; and the exercise of controlling powers, assumed by the British cabinet over the concerns of Ireland often afforded matter of serious controversy between the viceroy and the nation and had, in some instances, been resisted by the parliament with a warmth and a pertinacity which foretold a certainty of more important contests.

These struggles, however, although frequent were fruitless. The country was not yet ripe for independence, constitutional freedom had been so long obsolete that even its first

principles were nearly forgotten, and the people were again to learn the rudiments before they could speak the language of liberty. But the fortitude, the wisdom, and the perseverance of the Anglo-American colonies, the feebleness, the impolicy, and the division of Great Britain soon taught Ireland the importance of the crisis; and by a firmness, a moderation, and a unanimity unparalleled in the annals of revolution, the Irish Volunteers acquired for their country a civic crown which nothing but the insanity of rebellion and the artifices and frauds of Union could ever have torn from the brow of the Irish people.

Absentees who have ever been and ever will remain an obstacle to the substantial prosperity of Ireland exerted themselves more particularly at this period, in giving a strenuous and weighty opposition to every measure of innovation, they knew their Irish demesnes only by name and by income, they felt no interest but for their rents, and no patriotism but for the territory, alarmed at any legislative measure originating in Ireland. They showed themselves equally ignorant and regardless of her constitution, and ever proved themselves the steady adherents of the Minister for the time being; their proxies in the Lords, and their influence in the Commons were to be transferred to him on a card or in a letter, and on every division in both houses almost invariably formed a phalanx against the true and genuine interest of the country.

However zealous and determined the incipient exertions of the Irish nation might have been, they would probably have been crushed and extinguished had not a class of men, possessing the first talents in the senate and the highest confidence of the country, stepped boldly forward to support the people. In those days the Irish bar, a body equally formidable to the Government by their character and their capacity, too independent to be restrained, and too proud to be corrupted, comprised many sons of the resident noblemen and commoners of Ireland. The legal science was at that time considered as part of an Irish gentleman's education; the practice was then not a trade, but a profession. Eloquence was cultivated by its votaries, as a preparation for the higher duties of the senate, and as almost every peer and every commoner had a relative enrolled among their number, so they had an interest in the conduct and honor of that department of society. The influence, therefore, of the bar as a body, in-

creased by the general respect for the connections and cultivated talents of its members, gave them an ascendancy both in and out of Parliament which could scarcely be counteracted, and on certain trying occasions the conduct of some of the law-officers afforded experimental proof that even they considered their offices as no longer tenable with advantage to the King, if the Minister should attempt to use them as instruments against the people.

The rank and station of the law-officers of Ireland in those days were peculiarly dignified, and conveyed an impression of importance which the modern degeneracy of talent and relaxation of wholesome forms and of distinctions has altogether done away with. The office of Prime Sergeant, then the first law-officer of Ireland, was filled at this period by one of the most amiable and eloquent men that ever appeared on the stage of politics—Walter Hussey Burgh, whose conduct in a subsequent transaction rendered him justly celebrated and illustrious. This gentleman was then representative for Dublin University, in which office he and M. Fitzgibbon were colleagues—men in whose public characters scarcely a trait of similarity can be discovered. Mild, moderate, and patriotic, Mr. Burgh was proud without arrogance, and dignified without effort; equally attentive to public concerns and careless of his own, he had neither avarice to acquire wealth nor parsimony to hoard it; liberal, even to profusion—friendly to a fault—and disinterested to a weakness—he was honest without affluence, and ambitious without corruption; his eloquence was of the highest order—figurative, splendid, and convincing; at the bar, in the Parliament, and among the people he was equally admired and universally respected.

But when we compare Mr. Burgh with the then Attorney General of Ireland, who had been selected by Lord Townsend to bear down, if possible, the spirit of the country, the contrast may give a strong view of that policy which falling ministers frequently and perhaps judiciously adopt, of endeavoring, if practicable, to enlist and seat upon their benches some popular and elevated personage of opposition who, by his character, may give strength to the party which surrounds him or, at least, may forever prostrate his own reputation by the unpopularity of the connection.

Mr. John Scott, then Attorney General and afterwards



created Earl of Clonmel and Chief Justice of Ireland, exhibited the most striking contrast to the character of the Prime Sergeant. Sprung from the humbler order of society, he adventured upon the world without any advantage save the strength of his intellect and the versatility of his talents. He held his head high, his boldness was his first introduction, his policy his ultimate preferment. Courageous, humorous, artificial, he knew the world well, and he profited by that knowledge; he cultivated the powerful, he bullied the timid, he fought the brave, he flattered the vain, he duped the credulous, and he amused the convivial. Half liked, half reprobated, he was too high to be despised, and too low to be respected. His language was coarse and his principles arbitrary; but his passions were his slaves, and his cunning was his instrument. He recollected favors received in his obscurity, and in some instances had gratitude to requite the obligation; but his avarice and his ostentation contended for the ascendancy; their strife was perpetual, and their victories alternate. In public and in private he was the same character; and, though a most fortunate man and a successful courtier, he had scarcely a sincere friend or a disinterested adherent.

This marked contrariety in character and disposition, which distinguished those chief law-officers of government, was equally discernible in almost every other department; the virtues and the talents of Grattan, of Flood, of Yelverton, of Daly, found their contrasts on the same benches; and these two distinguished characters are thus brought forward by anticipation to show in the strongest point of view how powerful and insinuating the public feeling of that day must have been, that could finally draw together in one common cause personages so opposite and so adverse on almost every political object and in every national principle.

The crisis, however, now approached when Ireland was for a moment to rear her head among imperial nations; strange and unforeseen events began to crowd the annals of the world—the established axioms of general polity began to lose their weight among nations; and governments, widely wandering from the fundamental principles of their own constitutions, seemed carelessly traveling the road to anarchy and revolution.

The rival powers of England and of France—ever jealous,



ever insincere—concluding deceptive negotiations by fallacious treaties—doubtful of each other's honor, and dreading each other's prowess—had long stood cautiously at bay—each watching for an unguarded open to give a mortal wound to her adversary—yet each dreading the consequences of an unsuccessful effort.

However, the perseverance and successes of America communicated a stimulating impulse to the councils of the French King; and that ill-fated monarch, urged on to his destiny, determined to strike a deadly blow at the pride and the commerce of England, by giving an effectual aid to her revolted colonies.

The question soon came to a speedy issue; an undecisive engagement with the French fleet in the Channel alarmed and irritated England; every prospect of accommodation vanished, and a declaration of war was issued by the French Government, with a pompous manifesto proclaiming the wanton injuries they had sustained from Great Britain.

Plunged into destructive warfare, each nation used their utmost efforts to accomplish their respective purposes. France determined to establish the independence of America; while England sought to reduce her colonies to the most decisive slavery. A transposition of national principles seemed to have been adopted by the Governments of both countries—despotic France combating to establish the rights of civil liberty, and England exerting all her energies to enforce a system of tyrannic government—the one marshalling the slaves of her arbitrary power to battle in the cause of pure democracy; the other rallying round an English standard the hired mercenaries of German avarice to suppress the principles of British freedom, and both Governments soliciting the aid of sanguinary savages to aggravate the horrors of a Christian war by the scalping-knife and the tomahawk of heathen murderers.

Europe beheld with amazement a combat so unnatural and disgusting, but it would have required a prophetic spirit to have then foretold that the French throne would be eventually overturned by the principles of those new allies, and would by the mighty shock of its fall shake even the foundations of the British constitution, though the total prostration of the one and the ministerial inroads upon the other would since have fully justified the hazard of that prediction.

Amidst the confusion incident to those great events Ireland yet remained unheeded and unthought of; her miseries and her oppressions had hardly engaged the consideration of the British minister. Meanwhile the Irish people, with a dignified anxiety, contemplated the probable termination of a contest by the result of which their own destiny must be determined. The subjugation of America might confirm the dependence of Ireland; and she was soon convinced that she could obtain her own constitutional rights from Great Britain only by the complete success and triumph of her colony.

Awaiting, therefore, the decrees of Providence, Ireland steadily surveyed the distant prospect of great and rival empires wantonly lavishing the blood and treasures of their people in a contest fundamentally repugnant to their established principles; but cautious, moderate, and firm in her conduct, though she wisely determined to avail herself of the crisis to promote the establishment of her independence, she fed the flame of liberty, she kindled not the blaze of licentiousness; while America fought to obtain a separation from England, Ireland took up arms only to obtain a just participation of her constitution.

To embarrass the offensive measures of England, and make a formidable diversion in favor of America, France manifested an intention of invading Ireland. In this alarming emergency Great Britain, from the dispersions of her military force, scattered into many distant nations of the world, and so numerous employed on the continent of America, found it impossible to afford a body of regular troops sufficient to protect Ireland in case of such invasion. Here let us for a moment pause and dispassionately reflect upon the situation of Great Britain and the conduct of Ireland at this most trying moment; let us survey the increasing imbecility of the one and the rising enemies of the other; and we must do justice to the moderation and generosity of a people whose long and grievous oppressions, if they could not have justified, would at least have palliated, a very different proceeding.

The state of England during this war became every day more difficult and distressing. A discontented people and an unpopular ministry, an empty treasury and a grievous taxation, a continental war and a colonial rebellion together formed an accumulation of embarrassment such as Great

Britain had never before experienced. Her forces in America were captured or defeated; her fleets had not yet attained that irresistible superiority which has since proved the only protection of the British Islands. Ireland, without money, militia, or standing army—without ordnance or fortifications—almost abandoned by England—had to depend solely on the spirit and resources of her own natives; and this critical state of Ireland, which the misconduct of Great Britain herself had occasioned, gave the first rise to those celebrated associations, the Irish Volunteers, the immediate means of obtaining Irish independence.

Many inducements prevailed to fill the ranks of these associations. The warlike propensities of the Irish people, so long restrained, and personal attachment to their chiefs and leaders were with them the first excitements; but the blending of ranks, and more intimate connection of the people, which was the immediate consequence of a general military system, quickly effected an extensive and marked revolution in the minds and manners of the entire nation; an important and extraordinary change, of which the gradations became every day more conspicuously discernible. The primary stimulus of the Irish farmer was only that which he felt in common with every other animated being—the desire of self-preservation. He associated against invasion because he heard that it would be his ruin, but his intercourse with the higher ranks opened the road to better information. Thus he soon learned that the Irish people were deprived of political rights, and that his country had endured political injuries; his ideas became enlarged, and quickly embraced more numerous and prouder objects; he began for the first time to know his own importance to the state; and, as knowledge advanced, the principles of constitutional independence were better understood, and more sedulously cultivated. The Irish peasant now assumed a different rank and a higher character; familiarized with arms, and more intimate with his superiors, he every day felt his love of liberty increased; the spirit at length became generally enthusiastic, and in less time than could have been supposed from the commencement of these associations, the whole surface of the island was soon covered with a self-raised host of patriot soldiers.

In the formation of those armed associations, the long-established distinctions between the Protestant and the Catholic could not be altogether forgotten. Many of the penal

laws were still in full force, Catholics were prohibited by statute from bearing arms in Ireland; and, from the rooted prejudices against allowing to that body any civil or military power whatever, strong objections arose to their admission into those armed bodies. The Catholics, however, neither took offence nor even showed any jealousy at this want of confidence; on the contrary, with their money and their exhortations, they zealously assisted in forwarding those very associations into which they themselves had not admission. Their calmness and their patriotism gained them many friends, and a relaxation of intolerance appeared rapidly to be gaining ground, but it was not until the volunteers had assumed a deliberative capacity, and met as armed citizens to discuss political questions, that the necessity of uniting the whole population of the country in the cause of independence became distinctly obvious. Those who foresaw that a general association of the Irish people was essential to the attainment of their constitutional objects, endeavored to reconcile schisms of sectarian jealousy by calm and rational observations; they argued that religious feuds had, in all countries, proved subversive of national prosperity, but to none more decidedly fatal than to modern Ireland—that the true interests of the Catholic and the Protestant were substantially the same, they breathed the same air, tilled the same soil, and had equal rights and claims to the participation of liberty, that they were endowed by nature with equal powers and faculties, intellectual and corporeal, and that they worshipped the same God, the truths and doctrines of revealed religion equally constituting the basis of their social duties, and the foundation of their religious tenets, and the principles of virtue and morality being equally inculcated from their pulpits and propagated at their altars. “Why, then,” they asked, “should a few theological subtilties, whose mysterious uncertainties lay far beyond the reach of human determination, and were altogether unnecessary to the arrangements of municipal institution, why should they distract a nation which to become free should become unanimous? Why should they excite controversies so strongly tainted with fanatic frenzy that no personal insult or aggravated injury, no breach of moral tie or of honorable contract could rouse rancor more acrimonious or animosity more unrelenting than that which originated solely from theoretic distinctions upon



inexplicable subjects? as if Irishmen were bound to promote the happiness of their neighbors in a future state by destroying their comforts and disturbing their tranquillity in the present."

It was also observed that, although this strange insanity might have existed in remote and dark ages when the disciples of every new sect proclaimed themselves the meritorious murderers of the old, when Christian chiefs assailed the pagan power only to make new proselytes to their own errors and victims to their own intolerance, and though in such unhappy times Ireland might have partaken of the general madness, and without peculiar disgrace have participated in the infirmities of Europe, yet, when the progress of civilization had opened the eyes and enlarged the understanding of the people; when the voice of rational liberty loudly called for the unanimous exertion of every sect in the common cause of independence, it was full time to discard these destructive prejudices which had so long and so effectually restrained the rights and retarded the prosperity of the Irish nation.

Nor can any historic incident more clearly illustrate the inestimable value of unanimity to an oppressed people than a contrasted exhibition of the independent spirit displayed by the Catholics in 1782, when they acquired a constitution by their firmness, and of their degenerate conduct in 1800 when they lost that constitution through their divisions and their servility.

Before the progress of the Irish Volunteers is particularly detailed, or the ultimate objects which they had in view, the genuine character of the people among whom so extraordinary an association originated should be clearly developed and perfectly understood; as many important events in Irish history would appear obscure and unaccountable without a due knowledge of the national character—a character ever misconceived or misrepresented in England, because the persons by whom the pictures were drawn, generally either too ignorant or too interested to draw it with fidelity, and so little of intimate intercourse had subsisted between the two countries that the people of England were in general as unacquainted with the real dispositions and habits of the Irish as with those of any nation upon the European continent.

It was therefore impossible that England should judiciously govern a people with whose feelings she was wont to



tifle, and with whose natural character she was so imperfectly acquainted, nor can she ever effectually acquire that knowledge until she is convinced that Ireland though formed by nature for her sister was never intended for her servant, and that, within her own bosom, she possesses powers, treasures, and resources yet unexplored by England, but which, if kindly cultivated and liberally encouraged, would contribute more strength and benefit to both than Great Britain has ever heretofore derived, or ever yet mented from the connection.

To attain a just conception of the remote causes of two great and repugnant revolutions in Ireland within eighteen years we must view the ranks of which society is there composed, as well as their proportions and their influence upon each other, and, in the peculiarities and ardency of that character, will be clearly discovered the true sources of many extraordinary events; it will evidently appear that, to the foibles of the unfortunate nation, worked upon by art, and imposed upon by policy, and not to native crimes or peculiar views, are attributable the frequency of her miseries and the consummation of her misfortune.

The Irish people have been as little known as they have been grossly defamed to the rest of Europe.

The lengths to which English writers have proceeded in pursuit of this object would surpass all belief were not the facts proved by histories written under the immediate eye and sanction of Irish Governments, histories replete with falsehood which, combined with the still more mischievous misrepresentations of modern writers, form altogether a mass of the most cruel calumnies that ever weighed down the character of a meritorious people.

This system, however, was not without its meaning. From the reign of Elizabeth the policy of England has been to keep Ireland in a state of internal division. Perfect unanimity among her inhabitants has been considered as likely to give her a population and a power incompatible with subjection, and there are not wanting natives of Ireland who, impressed with that erroneous idea, zealously plunge into the same doctrine as if they could best prove their loyalty to the King by villifying their country.

The Irish peasantry who necessarily composed the great body of the population combined in their character many of those singular and repugnant qualities which peculiarly

designate the people of different nations, and this remarkable contrariety of characteristic traits pervaded almost the whole current of their natural dispositions. Laborious, domestic, accustomed to wants in the midst of plenty they submit to hardships without repining, and bear the severest privations with stoic fortitude. The sharpest wit and the shrewdest subtilty, which abound in the character of the Irish peasant, generally lie concealed under the semblance of dullness or the appearance of simplicity; and his language, replete with the keenest humor, possesses an idiom of equivocation which never fails successfully to evade a direct answer to an unwelcome question.

Inquisitive, artful, and penetrating, the Irish peasant learns mankind without extensive intercourse and has an instinctive knowledge of the world without mingling in its societies, and never, in any other instance, did there exist a people who could display so much address and so much talent in the ordinary transactions of life as the Irish peasantry.

The Irish peasant has, at all periods, been peculiarly distinguished for unbounded but indiscriminate hospitality which, though naturally devoted to the necessities of a friend, is never denied by him even to the distresses of an enemy. To be in want or misery is the best recommendation to his disinterested protection; his food, his bed, his raiment are equally the stranger's and his own; and the deeper the distress the more welcome is the sufferer to the peasant's cottage.

His attachments to his kindred are of the strongest nature. The social duties are intimately blended with the natural disposition of an Irish peasant; though covered with rags, oppressed with poverty, and perhaps with hunger, the finest specimens of generosity and heroism are to be found in his unequalled character.

A martial spirit and a love of desultory warfare is indigenous to the Irish people. Battle is their pastime; whole parishes and districts form themselves into parties, which they denominate factions; they meet by appointment at their country fairs, there they quarrel without a cause, and fight without an object, and having indulged their propensity and bound up their wounds, they return satisfied to their own homes, generally without anger, and frequently in perfect friendship with each other. It is a melancholy reflection, that the successive Governments of Ireland should have been so

long and obstinately blind to the real interest of the country, as to conceive it more expedient to attempt the fruitless task of suppressing the national spirit by legal severity and penal enactments than to adopt a system of national instruction and general industry which, by affording employment to their faculties, might give to the minds of the people a proper tendency, and a useful and peaceable direction.

In general, the Irish are rather impetuously brave than steadily persevering; their onsets are furious, and their retreats precipitate; but even death has for them no terrors, when they firmly believe that their cause is meritorious. Though exquisitely artful in the stratagems of warfare, yet, when actually in battle, their discretion vanishes before their impetuosity; and—the most gregarious people under heaven—they rush forward in a crowd with tumultuous ardor, and without foresight or reflection, whether they are advancing to destruction or to victory.

An enthusiastic attachment to the place of their nativity is another striking trait of the Irish character, which neither time nor absence, prosperity nor adversity, can obliterate or diminish. Wherever an Irish peasant was born, there he wishes to die; and, however successful in acquiring wealth or rank in distant places, he returns with fond affection to renew his intercourse with the friends and companions of his youth and his obscurity.

An innate spirit of insubordination to the laws has been strongly charged upon the Irish peasantry; but a people—to whom the punishment of crimes appears rather as a sacrifice to revenge than a measure of prevention—can never have the same deference to the law, as those who are instructed in the principles of justice, and taught to recognize its equality. It has, however, been uniformly admitted by every impartial writer on the affairs of Ireland, that a spirit of strict justice has ever characterized the Irish peasant. Convince him, by plain and impartial reasoning, that he is wrong, and he withdraws from the judgment-seat, if not with cheerfulness, at least with submission, but, to make him respect the laws, he must be satisfied that they are impartial; and, with that conviction on his mind, the Irish peasant is as perfectly tractable as the native of any other country in the world.

An attachment to and a respect for females is another marked characteristic of the Irish peasant. The wife par-

takes of all her husband's vicissitudes; she shares his labor and his miseries, with constancy and with affection. At all the sports and meetings of the Irish peasantry, the women are always of the company, they have a great influence; and, in his smoky cottage, the Irish peasant, surrounded by his family, seems to forget all his privations. The natural cheerfulness of his disposition banishes reflection; and he experiences a simple happiness, which even the highest ranks of society might justly envy.

The middle class of gentry, interspersed throughout the country parts of the kingdom, possessed as much of the peasant character as accorded with more liberal minds and superior society. With less necessity for exertion than the peasant, and an equal inclination for the indulgence of indolence, their habits were altogether devoid of industry, and adverse to reflection—the morning chase and evening conviviality composed the diary of their lives, cherished the thoughtlessness of their nature, and banished the cares and solitudes of foresight. They uniformly lived beyond their means, and aspired beyond their resources; pecuniary embarrassments only gave a new zest to the dissipation which created it, and the gentry of Ireland at this period had more trouble and fewer cares than any gentry in the universe.

These habits, however, while they contracted the distance between the lower and the superior order, had also the effect of promoting their mutual good-will and attachment to each other. The peasant looked up to and admired, in the country gentleman, those propensities which he himself possessed—actuated by a native sympathy of this position he loved old customs; he liked to follow the track and example of his forefathers, and adhered to the fortunes of some ancient family, with a zealous sincerity; and, in matter of party or of faction, he obeyed the orders of his landlord, and even anticipated his wishes, with cheerfulness and humility.

The Irish country gentleman, without either the ties of blood or the weight of feudal authority, found himself surrounded by followers and adherents ever ready to adopt his cause, and risk their lives for his purposes, with as warm devotion as those of the Scottish laird or the highland chieftain; and this disposition, cultivated by family pride on the one side, and confirmed by immemorial habit on the other, greatly promoted the formation, the progress, and the zeal, of those



armed associations which soon afterwards covered the face of the country and for a moment placed the name of Ireland on the very highest pinnacle of effective patriotism.

It was the fashion of those days to cast upon the Irish gentry an imputation—it would be uncandid not to admit that there was some partial ground for it—that they showed a disposition to decide petty differences by the sword and placed too fastidious a construction on what they termed the “point of honor.” This practice certainly continued to prevail in many parts of Ireland, where time and general intercourse had not yet succeeded in extinguishing the romantic but honorable spirit of Milesian chivalry; and, when we reflect on the natural warlike disposition of the Irish people, that indigenous impetuosity and love of battle which so eminently distinguished their aboriginal character, it is not surprising that hasty and unnecessary encounters should occasionally occur among a people perpetually actuated by the pride of ancestry and the theories of honor. But, even in these contests, the Irish gentleman forgave his adversary with as much readiness as he fought him, he respected the courage which aimed at his own life, and the strongest friendships were sometimes formed, and frequently regenerated, on the field of battle. It is natural to suppose that this practice should have been exaggerated, by the English people, whom nature had endowed with less punctilious and much more discreet propensities.

The cowardly crime of suicide, which prevailed and prevails in England, was scarcely ever known among the Irish. Circumstances, which would plunge an Englishman into a state of mortal despondency, would only rouse the energies of an Irishman to bound over his misfortunes—under every pressure, in every station, and in every climate, a lightness of heart, an openness of disposition, distinguishes him from the inhabitants of every other country.

On the whole of the characters, the Irish gentry, though far from being faultless, had many noble qualities—generous, hospitable, friendly, brave—but careless, prodigal, and indiscreet—they possessed the materials of distinguished men with the propensities of obscure ones, and, by their openness and sincerity, too frequently became the dupes of artifice, and the victims of dissimulation.

Among the highest orders of the Irish people, the distinguishing features of national character had been long



wearing away, and becoming less prominent and remarkable. The manners of the nobility, in almost every European country, verge to one common centre; by the similarity of their education and society, they acquire similar habits; and a constant intercourse clothes their address and language, as it does their persons, in one peculiar garb—disguising the strong points, and concealing the native traits, of their original characters

The unprecedented expenses of the American War, which first familiarized the English people to empty their purses for the support of unnecessary and inglorious warfare (in which they have since become such extraordinary proficient), called every day for new resources, and the minister conceived and executed the artful project of increasing his financial means and parliamentary power by erecting a banking and commercial interest on the site and ruins of the lauded representation. Money brokers began to institute a new order in the state, and to form, if not an integral part, at least a necessary appendage to every subsequent administration of Great Britain.

Experience has proved the mischiefs of that fatal policy to the whole of the empire.

Though the greater number of the Irish noblemen had been of remote creations, a few had not been long enough removed from the mass of the community to have acquired very high ideas of hereditary pride, or to have emblazoned the shield of very ancient or illustrious pedigrees.

As a body, the Irish lords were not peculiarly prominent in the affairs of their country; but they were dignified. Their debates (until the accession of Lord Clare) were calm and temperate, and, though like the members of all other political assemblies, they were individually various in talent and in character, the appearance of the whole was grand; and their conduct, if not spirited, was firm, respectable and decorous.

The Protestant church had great weight in the community; the hierarchy, participating in the dignity of an independent parliament, possessed the united influence of spiritual rank and legislative importance; the parochial clergy, though well affected to the state, still adhered to the interests of their country, and, assuming a deportment decorous and characteristic, were at that time generally esteemed, and deservedly respected.

The provision of the inferior Protestant clergy was then (as at the present) quite disproportioned to their duties and profession. Many of that meritorious class of men, the officiating curates, whose precepts and example were to direct the morals and guide the conduct of the people, had become grey in poverty, and laboring under the pressure of severe necessities, effectually preached up to their congregations the exercise of that charity, which would have been aptly and benevolently applied to their own persons.

The general conduct of these men had at all times remained unexceptional. From them the character of the Irish clergy was best to be collected; the luxurious possessor of sinecure and plurality, enjoying ease and abundance without care or solicitude, must form a very inferior criterion of experienced merit, when compared to the distressed pastor, whose conduct remains exemplary, while his indigence and necessities might have tempted him into errors. The extremes of income among the Protestant clergy were too distant, their wealth and their poverty formed too strong a contrast.

The Catholic clergy had then an unlimited influence over the people of their own persuasion. Though the cruel impolicy of the penal statutes had not been altogether set aside, they remained dutiful and obedient to the sovereign power, cheerfully submissive to the existing laws and friendly and affectionate to their Protestant fellow-subjects.

Candidates for Catholic ordination were sent to France for spiritual instruction, and returned to their own country though learned, still retaining many of the propensities of their origin, they showed that their respect to superior rank, and submission to the constituted authorities, were rather increased than diminished by their foreign education.

The monarchy of France, despotic, splendid, and powerful, was at that time regarded with devotion by the French people, as a structure which neither time could destroy, nor tempests endanger. Its broad base covered every portion of the people; its stupendous height was surveyed with awe, and its colossal strength beheld with admiration. The ecclesiastical communities, fostered under its shelter, experienced the protection of despotic power, and, by their doctrines and their practice endeavored to increase its strength, and secure its permanence.

The Irish student, early imbibing those monastic prin-

ples, was taught at Saint Omer the advantages of undefined power in a king, and of passive obedience in a subject; he was there instructed to worship a throne, and to mingle his devotion to heaven and to monarchy. The restoration of a Catholic king over Ireland had long ceased to be practicable, and such projects therefore, were hopeless, and relinquished; and the Irish Catholic clergyman, however he might naturally have wished for the regal supremacy of his own sect, had long since abandoned every view of an object altogether unattainable.

British supremacy had then no overt enemies, save its own ministers, nor any conspiracies against its power, but the arbitrary determinations of its own cabinet.

Thus returning from his novitiate, and educated with all the dispositions of a submissive subject he found his native country in a state of profound tranquillity. His views were contracted; his ambition extended no further than the affections of his flock, and the enjoyments of society. The closest intimacy subsisted between him and his parishioners; he mingled in all their pastimes, and consoled them in their miseries; but the most convivial among them knew how to distinguish clearly between the occasional familiarities of personal intercourse, and a dutiful respect for his religious functions; and, even though their companion might have been condemned, their priest was always sure to be respected.

The Catholic and the Protestant at the same time lived in habits of great harmony; they harbored no animosities or indisposition towards each other; the one governed without opposition, the other submitted without resistance; and the Catholic clergy had every inclination to retain their flock within proper limits and found no difficulty in effecting that object.

The severity with which the agents of the Protestant clergy in some parishes collected their tithes, and the exactions and oppressions, which the middle man exercised over the occupant of the land, occasionally excited partial disturbances; but, in these, there was nothing of a revolutionary nature; they were only the nocturnal riots of some oppressed and mis-managed districts which the civil power in general found no difficulty in suppressing.



### CHAPTER III.

#### IRELAND AWAKENED TO A SENSE OF HER SLAVERY—DEMANDS HER JUST RIGHTS.

The population of Ireland, distributed into those classes, endowed with those qualities, and borne down by an accumulation of impolitic and ungenerous restraints, at length awakened as it were from a deep trance. The pulse of that nation, torpid through habitual oppression, began to throb; her blood, stimulated by the stings of injustice, which she had so long and so patiently endured, circulated with a new rapidity; her heart, re-animated, sent motion and energy through her whole frame; and from a cold and almost lifeless course, Ireland was seen majestically arising from the tomb of obscurity, and paying the first tribute of her devotion at the shrine of liberty.

Roused to a sense of her miserable situation, she cast her eyes around on the independent States of Europe, and compared their strength, their capacity, and their resources with her own. Encouraged by the view of her comparative superiority, she soon perceived that she had strength, and means, and opportunity to redress herself from the wrongs and depredations she was suffering; and that so long as she tolerated the authority of the British Legislature over her concerns, so long her commerce, her constitution, and her liberties, must lie prostrate at the foot of every British minister.

The political situations of both nations at that critical period, afforded a more than common scope for political contemplation; even the coldest politicians of that day were led involuntarily to reflect on the nature of the federative compact between the two countries, and could not avoid perceiving the total absence of that reciprocal good faith and confidence which alone could ensure the integrity of the empire, or the permanence of the connection. In theory, the two nations were linked together by the strongest ties of mutual interest and mutual security; but in practice those interests were separated, and that conjunction of strength, on which the security of empires must at all times depend, was too frequently disregarded, as if England had forgotten that she owed a great proportion of stability to the co-operation of the



Irish people, and that if one hundred thousand Irish subjects, who fought her battles in her armies and in her navy, became even neutralized, by insults or by injuries, to their country, the English nation might too late discover the fatal impolicy of her system.

The fundamental principles upon which the connection between the two nations was intrinsically founded, soon became a subject of general inquiry and universal discussion amongst every rank and class of society; and it required but little difficulty to convey to the quick conception of a naturally acute and intelligent people, a comprehensive view of their rights and of their deprivations. Nor was Ireland, at this period, destitute of able and active partisans, anxious and competent to instruct her people in language best adapted to impress upon the poignancy of their national feelings, and enlarge the scope of their political understandings.

They were told by these instructors, that Ireland was constitutionally connected with Great Britain, upon the basis of a complete equality of rights, that she possessed a resident Parliament of her own, competent, in all points, to legislate on her own concerns, in no point connected with, or subordinate to, that of Great Britain.

That their king was bound to govern Ireland, not through his crown of England, but through his crown of Ireland—conferred upon him by the Irish nation, and worn by him, in conjunction with that of Great Britain, as the chief magistrate of both—but to govern each country severally by their respective laws and their distinct legislatures, and not the one through the other, and though the Irish crown was, by the constitution of that country, placed for ever on the head of the same legislative monarch who should wear that of England; yet the Irish people were not legally bound to obey any laws but those enacted by their own legislature, to transfer the sceptre of their realm to any usurped authority, or submit to the hostile or corrupt policy of any minister who might occasionally occupy the seat of power in England; that their oath of allegiance was taken to the king of Ireland, and not to the Parliament of Great Britain, that the establishment of this principle was indispensable to their existence as a nation, and that every violation of it was a direct deviation from the duty of the Irish crown, and a virtual dereliction of the compact between the two countries; and that the king's

ministers of either country advising unconstitutional measures, to violate the constitutional independence of Ireland, must be considered as traitors to the Irish crown, and enemies to the British empire.

It was also observed, that this assumption of authority to legislate for Ireland, whatever coloring it might have received by the dissimulation or ingenuity of its supporters, had, in fact, for its real object the restraint of her commerce and the suppression of her manufactures, so far as they might interfere with the interests of England; because the management of the mere local concerns of Ireland by her own parliament was altogether immaterial to Great Britain, unless where a commercial rivalry might be the probable consequence of successful industry and legislative encouragement.

From this reasoning, it was obvious that the redress of these grievances could not depend solely upon any exertions of the Irish legislature. The Peers—from the causes hereinbefore assigned—were influenced at that time by a very small portion of public feeling; the measures of the commons might be suppressed by an act of the Privy Council; and it became manifest, that an universal and determined co-operation of the whole people with their representatives, to rescue their representation by vigorous measures, could alone operate with sufficient effect upon the policy and fears of England; and that a general appeal to the people would be justified by the soundest axioms of civil government; as long experience had fully ascertained, that nothing was to be gained by the forbearance of the one nation, or to be expected from the voluntary justice of the other

The Irish people being thus apprised of the real source of all their grievances, the subject quickly engrossed their whole thoughts, and became familiar to their understandings. A new and broad field of reflection was opened to the middle orders; political discussions necessarily followed from day to day; at every public and private meeting, and in every district, these discussions turned on the principles of liberty, and as the subject expanded, their ideas became enlarged; those who could read, liberally instructed the illiterate as to the rudiments of their history and the rights of the constitution; and by familiar deductions the misery of the peasant was without difficulty brought home to the corruption of the

ministers. All ranks of the community began to mingle and converse at their public meetings; the influence of that general communication diffused itself rapidly amongst every class of society, and the people, after having perfectly ascertained the hardships of their situation, naturally proceeded to discuss the most decisive means of redressing their grievances.

The circumstances of public affairs in America and on the continent of Europe, but more especially in England herself, were every moment becoming more and more propitious to the political emancipation of Ireland. A dark cloud appeared collecting over the head of Great Britain—the rays of the setting sun could scarcely penetrate the obscurity of the gloom which surrounded her—and though she faced the impending hurricane with magnanimity and perseverance, she experienced a most anxious solicitude at the awful crisis which was rapidly approaching her.

Her situation was terrific. The States of America, colonized by her industry, and peopled by her convicts tearing themselves away from the mother country, and appealing to the whole world against the tyranny which had at once caused and justified her disobedience. British armies wandering through boundless deserts, and associating with the savage tribes for savage purposes, dwindling by their victories, and diminishing by their conquests, surrendering their swords to those whom they had recently vanquished, and lowering the flag of England, with all the courtesies of continental warfare, to those very men whom the preceding moment they had proclaimed as traitors to their king and to their country.

However, the wise and deliberate measures which Ireland on this occasion adopted, proved not only her unshaken fidelity, but her moderation and her unaffected attachment to Great Britain. She saw the perilous situation of her sister country; and though she determined to profit by the crisis, in justly reclaiming her commerce and her constitution, she also determined to stand or fall with the British empire, and to share the fate of England in the tremendous confederacies which were formed and were forming against her.

The Irish people felt that they had a double duty to perform—to themselves, and to their posterity. England herself had given them a precedent. She had proved by the ex-

perience of centuries, that when she had an object to achieve in Ireland, she had never been restrained by the punctilious dictates either of honor or humanity, and had never failed to take advantage of the feebleness of Ireland to impose the grievous weight of her arbitrary restrictions; she had, at all periods, systematically encouraged the internal dissensions of that people, the better to humble them for the yoke which she had always been ready to place upon their country. Ireland, therefore, felt that she would be justified by British precedent to take advantage of this important crisis, and that even the practical principles of the British constitution had declared and justified the right of popular resistance. England had, upon the same principle of resistance to arbitrary power, attempted to justify the murder of one king, and the despotism of another, whilst Ireland, preferring her allegiance to her policy, remained faithful to both, and was rewarded for her loyalty by massacre and confiscation.

However, a hasty or impetuous resistance of the Irish people, even to the most arbitrary acts of their King or of their Government, was by no means a principle congenial to their political character; whilst it was obvious to the whole world that England had adopted those violent and outrageous proceedings against her own monarchs, upon principles and pretenses far less constitutional, and more inconsistent with her liberties, than the measures and conduct which had been wantonly and systematically practiced by British ministers against Irish freedom. With this useful and awful lesson before her eyes, Ireland wisely considered that she would best raise and establish her national character, and effect her just objects, by a gradual reassumption of her rights, and a temperate and fair demand of constitutional liberty; that her moderation would form an edifying contrast to the violence and intemperance of England, whenever her liberties were invaded, and that the advantage which the embarrassed state of Great Britain had now thrown into the hands of Ireland, would be most honorably exercised by a calm and loyal, but resolute and effectual proceeding. She perceived, however, that the moment most favorable to her objects had arrived; which, if suffered to pass by without effort, might never recur; and it therefore only remained to Ireland to ascertain the means most moderate but most likely to call Great Britain to a sense of reason and of justice, and to secure to herself



the attainment of her rights, without the danger of hostile convulsion, or the horrors of civil conflict.

England, notwithstanding she had in some instances suspended, and in others prohibited, the exportation of Irish manufactures, inundated the Irish markets with every species of her own, and with a view effectually to destroy all power of competition in Ireland, the great capitalists of England determined, even at any loss, to undersell the Irish in their own markets—a loss, however, which they thought would be eventually and amply repaid by the monopoly which must necessarily succeed the utter destruction of Irish manufacture

This system it was impossible for the Irish manufacturer to resist or counteract, his capital was too small to bear the losses of competition, resistance would have been vain, he had therefore no alternative but to change his trade, or submit, and famish.

It depended on the exertions of the people at large to resist every vicious and destructive project; and they lost no time in adopting incipient measures of resistance. With this view, they resolutely determined to adopt a non-importation and non-consumption agreement throughout the whole kingdom; and by excluding not only the importation, but the consumption of any British manufacture in Ireland, visited back upon the English combinators the ruin of their own treachery. No sooner was this measure publicly proposed, than it was universally adopted; it flew quicker than the wind throughout the whole nation; the manufacturing bodies, the corporate towns, the small retailers, the general merchants, at once universally adopted this vigorous determination, and the great body of the people, by general resolutions, and universal acclamations, avowed their *firm* determination to support the measure, till they should acquire a restoration of their political rights.

Meanwhile, the armed associations hourly gained strength in great numbers, they began to acquire the appendages and establishments of a regular army—discipline and confidence; and gradually consolidated themselves into regiments and brigades; some procured cannon and field equipments, and formed companies of artillery; the completion of one corps stimulated the formation of another, and at length almost every independent Protestant of Ireland was enrolled



as a patriot soldier; and the whole body of the Catholics declared themselves the decided auxiliaries of their armed countrymen.

This extraordinary armament—the recollections of which will forever excite in Ireland a devotion to the cause of liberty, which neither time can efface nor misfortunes extinguish—actuated solely by the pure spirit of incorruptible patriotism, and signalized by a conduct more temperate and more judicious than had ever controlled the acts and objects of any military body in the history of the world

The modern military corps, which have been so skillfully, and perhaps wisely, embodied, to preclude any recurrence to the measure of volunteering, possess no analogy to these celebrated associations, save that the loyalty of the Volunteers was to their *country* and *their King*—the loyalty of the Yeomen, to the *King of England* and to *his Ministers*.

Self-formed, and self-governed, the Volunteers accepted no commissions whatever from the Crown, and acknowledged no connection whatever with the Government; the private men appointed their own officers, and occasionally cashiered them for misconduct or miscapacity; they accepted no pay, the more wealthy soldier cheerfully shared his funds with his poorer comrade—and the officers contributed their proportions to the general stock purse.

Yet notwithstanding this perverted state of all military establishments, their subordination was complete; the soldier obeyed, from the instinctive impulse of honor to himself and duty to his country, the officer commanded upon the same principle, and very few instances occurred where either were found to deviate from the straightened line of military rectitude. The rules of discipline were adopted by general assent, and that passive obedience which, in regular armies, is enforced by punishment amongst the Volunteers of Ireland, was effected by honor.

They assumed various uniforms; green, white, scarlet, or blue were the prevailing colors. Their line, therefore, appeared variegated, and peculiarly striking. Their arms were at first provided by themselves; but the extraordinary increase of their numbers rendered them at length unable to procure a sufficient supply by purchase; they had then but one course—they confidently required arms from the Government; the Government, whatever reluctance they might have

felt to arm men who acknowledged no supremacy, yet did not think it safe to refuse their demand; and with an averted eye handed out to the Volunteers twenty thousand stands of arms from the Castle of Dublin.

Being completely equipped, the acquirement of persons capable of instructing so large a body in military tactics, appeared a matter of the greatest difficulty; but the same events which had at first inspired the Irish with a determination to arm, furnished them with the means not only of acquiring discipline, but of increasing their ardor.

The disasters of the American war had restored to the bosom of Ireland many brave men, whose health had sunk under the consequences of wounds and sufferings, and who, having witnessed the successful struggles of America for liberty, had returned to Ireland at that moment when she was critically preparing to assert her own. The association of these experienced veterans was sedulously courted by the Irish Volunteers, their orders were obeyed with confidence and alacrity, and amongst the country corps the effect of their instructions became suddenly conspicuous, and, under their experience, discipline advanced with rapid progress.

The intercourse and conversation of those persons also had a powerful effect, by transfusing into their pupils that military mind which a veteran soldier can never relinquish. In their convivial hours, the sergeant, surrounded by his company, expatiating on the events of actual service, and introducing episodes of individual bravery, perhaps of his own undauntedness and sagacity, gradually banished every other topic from conversation at those meetings. The successful perseverance of America had impressed even the soldier himself who had fought against her, with an involuntary respect for the principles of his enemies; a constant intercourse with his Irish associates soon excited in him congenial feelings, and he began to listen with pleasure to their interesting question, "Why should not his own brave countrymen possess as much constitutional liberty as those foreign colonists who had conquered?"

It is difficult to conceive of the fascination which seized upon the heretofore contracted intellect of the military farmer, by a repetition of these novel and warlike subjects; the martial propensity of his innate character had already rendered him peculiarly susceptible of these animating impressions,

and he now almost imperceptibly imbibed a military mind, and acquired a soldier's feeling. In a word, the whole nation became enamoured of arms, and those who were not permitted to bear them, considered themselves as honored by being employed to carry the food and ammunition of the soldier.

The chief commanders of these armed bodies were men of the highest and most distinguished characters, and each corps was in general headed by persons of the first respectability in their respective districts, selected generally for their popularity and independence; but all these corps were, for a considerable time, totally distinct and unconnected; nor was it until they had formed into a consolidated column, under the command of the amiable and illustrious Charlemont, that they acquired the irresistible impulse of a co-operating power. The mild, but determined patriotism of that respected nobleman, gave a new tint of character to the whole army which he commanded, and chased away the tongue of slander from their objects and their conduct.

In the number of those who, at this moment were launched, for the first time, into public observation, there appeared a person, who, without possessing the highest reputation for public talent, or the most undeviating line of public principle, by the honest and spirited termination of his political life, has been justly raised upon the elevated pedestal of national gratitude; a person, whose early appointment to the first financial department of Ireland, and whose official conduct from that day to the catastrophe of the Irish Parliament, will necessarily be the subject of frequent and important observations, and authorizes an introduction of his name and character, at an earlier stage of this history, than would otherwise be consistent with the regular detail of a progressive narrative.

Sir John Parnell, the commandant of a Volunteer association, was the son of a crafty and prudent minor politician (Sir John Parnell, of Rathlegue, in the Queen's County), and was educated with a view to a diplomatic situation; but on his return from the Continent, was found by his father too deficient in the necessary attainments of evasion and duplicity, to qualify him for the high departments of foreign diplomacy; his talents, therefore, became destined for home consumption, and by the intrigues of his father, and a forced exertion of his own abilities, he was soon noticed in the Irish

Parliament as a person of more than ordinary capacity—and after a veering course of local politics, he was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer. In that situation he continued, till the project of a union called forth the public virtues of every man who possessed any, and too late opened the eyes of the nation to its steady friends, and to its temporizing enemies.

Sir John Parnell had an eminent capacity for public business, but a lamentable deficiency of system in its arrangement. His strong mind and cultivated understanding lost much of their effect by the flurry of his manner, which frequently impeded the perspicuity of his language.

His intellect was clear, his memory retentive and his conception just; he possessed esteem without an effort to obtain it, and preserved his friends, without exercising his patronage; he supported the Ministry without offending the opposition, and all parties united in calling him an honorable man.

Plain, frank, cheerful and convivial, he generally preferred society to trouble, and seemed to have rid himself of a weight when he had executed a duty. As a financier, he was not perfect—as a statesman he was not deep—as a courtier, he was not polished—but as an officer, he was not corrupt; and though many years in possession of high office, and extensive patronage, he showed a disinterestedness almost unparalleled; and the name of a relative, or of a dependent, of his own, scarcely in a single instance increased the place or the pension list of Ireland.

Though his education and habits were ministerial, his mind was intrinsically patriotic, and a sentiment of independent spirit not unfrequently burst out from under the pressure of that official restriction which the duty of his station had necessarily imposed upon him; but his appointment as a minister never induced him to forget his birth as an Irishman, and his attachments to the sovereign never diminished his philanthropy to the subject.

After an honest, faithful, and zealous service of his king, for seventeen years—as Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer—he was called upon by the minister to sacrifice his principle and betray his country—to efface the impressions of his youth and tarnish the honor of his maturity—to violate his faith and falsify his conviction; but the fetters of office could not restrain the spirit of its captive; he lost his station, but he retained his integrity, and was compensated for the conse-



quences of an undeserved dismissal, by the approbation of his conscience and the affection of his country.

The Volunteer corps which he commanded, early and zealously adopted the cause of Irish independence—a cause he strenuously adhered to, to the last moment of his existence—and in that noble firmness with which he resisted a legislative union, and disobeyed the mandates of a crafty and vindictive viceroy; he has left to the present age a brilliant and a rare example of a minister, honest enough to prefer his character to his office, and proud enough to postpone his interest to his honor.

The Volunteer system now becoming universal in Ireland, effected an important and visible change in the minds and manners of the middle and lower orders of the people; by the occurrence of new events, and the promulgation of novel principles, their natural character became affected in all its bearings, and acquired, or rather disclosed, new points, which at that period tended to promote their prosperity, but eventually formed the grand pretence for the distinguishment of their independence.

The familiar association of all ranks, which the nature of their new military connection necessarily occasioned, every day lessened that wide distinction, which had theretofore separated the higher and lower orders of society—the landlord and the tenant—the nobleman and the artisan—the general and the soldier—now, for the first time, sat down at the same board, shared the same fare, and enjoyed the same conviviality. The lower order learned their own weight in the community; the higher were taught their dependence on the people; and those whose illiterate minds had never before conceived or thought on the nature of political constitutions, or the fundamental principles of civil government, now learned from the intercourse and conversation of their superiors, the rudiments of that complicated but noble science, the misconception and the abuse of which, has since become the severest scourge that ever afflicted the states of Europe.

A visible alteration was also soon observable in the general appearance of the period; the squalid garb and careless dress of the Irish farmer was now exchanged for the minute cleanliness and regularity of the soldier. A striking revolution took place not only in the minds, but also in the external appearance of the Irish; their intellect acquired strength by



exercise and information—their address was improved by intercourse and discipline—and their general appearance by dress and regularity; and had not the same causes, which led to the concessions of 1782, induced the British Government to recall the constitution which had been wrested from its feebleness, these unparalleled associations would have conferred advantages on the country, beyond all measures which human wisdom could have suggested for its improvement.



Ornament on top of Devenish Round Tower.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers," 400.

## CHAPTER IV.

### EVENTS IN THE IRISH HOUSE OF COMMONS—PUBLIC CHARACTER OF HENRY GRATTAN—CHARLEMONT AND THE VOLUNTEERS.

While those transactions were taking place throughout the country, a memorable and unexpected event occurred in the Irish Parliament.

The sessions of 1779-80 commenced with a scene which, while it elevated the Irish people to the height of expectation, and inspired them with a new confidence, paralyzed the British Government, and for the first moment, made known decidedly to the councils of that country, that they had no longer to deal with a timid, dispirited, and unprotected nation.

The adoption of non-important and non-consumption agreements had already created considerable anxiety in the British Minister as to the probable result of the ensuing session, and the Lord Lieutenant was directed to open the Parliament with a speech, remotely alluding to his Majesty's sentiments of liberality, but without specifying any measure of concession, and so cautiously guarded, as neither to alarm the public nor commit the Government; but the days of insipidity had now passed away; the Viceroy's speeches from the throne, for almost a century, had been composed nearly in the same commonplace language and trite observation, and the addresses of both Houses, in reply to those speeches, had been almost invariably mere echoes of the speech itself, with general assurances of liberal supplies and increasing loyalty.

On the opening of the Session, however, there appeared a more than common sensation amongst the leading members of Parliament; the strong and animated declarations of public sentiment which had been published during the prorogation, made an extraordinary impression, but the extent or consequences of that impression could not be ascertained, until the proceedings of the House of Commons gave an opportunity of observing what effect the new spirit of the people would now have upon the conduct of their representatives.

At length the Parliament assembled; the anxious and inquisitive eye of the Secretary and of the steady partisans of government passed rapidly throughout the whole House

alarmed by the appearance of some unusual resistance, they endeavored, from the looks, the suggestions, the manner of the members, to prejudge the results of the first night's debates, which had generally decided the complexion of the ensuing session, but no sagacity could have anticipated the turn which Irish affairs were to receive on that night—no human foresight could have predicted that blow which the system of the British Cabinet was about to receive by one single sentence—or have foreseen that that single sentence would be the composition of the first law-officer of the Irish Government.

The Lord Lieutenant's speech was delivered by him, in the House of Lords in the accustomed tone of confidence, ambiguity, and frivolous recommendations; and in the Commons, the usual echo and adulatory address was moved by Sir Robert Deane, a person devoted to the views of Government. A pause succeeded and an unusual communication was perceivable between several members on the Government and the Opposition sides of the House. A decided resistance to the usual qualified address now became certain; the Secretary, moving irresolutely from place to place, was seen endeavoring to collect the individual opinions of the members—and the law-officers of the Crown evinced a diffidence never more observable before in their department; throughout the House a new sense of expectation and anxiety was evident.

At length Mr Henry Grattan arose, with a somewhat more than usual solemnity, he seemed laboring with his own thoughts, and preparing his mind for a more than ordinary exertion. The address and the language of this extraordinary man were perfectly original, from his first essay in Parliament, a strong sensation had been excited by the point and eccentricity of his powerful eloquence—nor was it long until those transcendent talents, which afterwards distinguished this celebrated personage, were perceived rising above ordinary capacities, and, as a charm, communicating to his countrymen that energy, that patriotism, and that perseverance, for which he himself became so eminently distinguished; his action, his tone, his elocution in public speaking, bore no resemblance to that of any other person, the flights of genius, the arrangements of composition, and the solid strength of connected reasoning, were singularly blended in his fiery, yet deliberative language; he thought in antithesis, his irony and

his satire, rapid and epigrammatic, bore down all opposition, and left him no rival in the broad field of eloquent invective; his ungraceful action, however, and the hesitating tardiness of his first sentences, conveyed no favorable impression to those who listened only to his exordium, but the progress of his brilliant and manly eloquence soon absorbed every idea, but that of admiration at the overpowering extent of his intellectual faculties.

This was Mr. Henry Grattan of 1779—in the vicissitudes of whose subsequent life will be remarked three distinct eras of public character, and disgusting proofs of popular inconsistency—the era of his glory, the era of his calumny, and the era of his resurrection; in the first, elevated to a pitch of unbounded gratification, by the attachment, the gratitude, and the munificence of his countrymen; in the second, despoiled of health, of happiness, and of character, by the artifices of a powerful enemy, and in the third rising from a bed of sickness, re-embarking a shattered frame in the service of his country. In Parliament he taught the doctrines of Molyneux and of Lucas; he drew the true constitutional distinctions between the Crown and the Government, the magistrate and the function, the individual and the sceptre. But the partiality of the friend may possibly bias the pen of the historian; his public principles will be best ascertained by tracing the un-deviating line of his public conduct.

The career of this extraordinary man is finished. But he survived his country, he lived to view the demolition of that noble fabric raised by the exertion of his own virtue and perseverance, and the catastrophe of that constitution, which, “as he watched over it in its cradle, so he attended it to its grave.”

After an oration, replete with most luminous reasoning, the severest censure, pathetic and irresistible eloquence, Mr. Grattan moved an amendment to the address, viz, “That we beseech your Majesty to believe, that it is with the utmost reluctance that we are constrained to approach you on the present occasion; but the constant drain to supply absentees, and the unfortunate prohibition of our trade, have caused such calamity, that the natural support of our country has decayed, and our manufacturers are dying for want; famine stalks hand in hand with hopeless wretchedness; and the only means left to support the expiring trade of this miser-

able part of your Majesty's dominions, is to open a free export trade, and let your Irish subjects enjoy their natural birthright "

His arguments had been so conclusive, his position so self-evident, his language so vigorous and determined, his predictions so alarming, and the impression which those combined qualities made upon the House was so deep, and so extensive, that the supporters of Government, paralyzed and passive, seemed almost ready to resign the victory, before they had even attempted a resistance.

The confusion which now appeared on the Treasury bench was very remarkable—became very unusual. The Secretary (Sir Richard Heron), for the first time showed a painful mistrust in the steadiness of his followers; he perceived that the spirit of the House was rising into a storm, which all the influence of his office would not be able to allay, direct opposition would be injudicious, if not fatal, palpable evasion would be altogether impracticable, the temporizing system was almost worn out, and procrastination seemed to yield no better prospect of a favorable issue; the officers of Government sat sullenly on their benches, awaiting their customary cue from the lips of the Minister, but he was too skillful to commit himself to a labyrinth, from whence return was so difficult and precarious, and all was silent. At length Sir Henry Cavendish hesitatingly arose, to declare his dissent to this first decided effort of the Irish Parliament to assert its liberties

Sir Henry Cavendish was one of those persons who are generally found in the front of a popular assembly, and acquire notoriety by becoming the oracle of some insulated department. Though possessed of a plain, shrewd understanding, abundance of craft, a convenient temper, and imposing plausibility; after unavailing effort to acquire the fame of a rhetorician, Sir Henry contented himself with the reputation of profound knowledge in parliamentary precedents and points of order.

He was ever prepared with a string of parliamentary precedents, appropriate to every question, and adapted to every circumstance, which he skilfully contrived to substitute for reasoning, and oppose to argument, and should his prolific memory chance to fail him in the quotation of his documents, his inventive genius never let the subject fail for want of an auxiliary.



On points of order he was at least as garrulous as orthodox, and peculiarly expert at critical interruption; under color of keeping order, he assumed a license for transgressing it—and in affecting to check the digression of others, he frequently made it the first figure of his own rhetoric; he was admirably calculated for desultory debate—when he was right he was concise—when he was wrong he was pertinacious, sarcastic, obstinate, plausible, persevering; he gained time when he could not make proselytes, and became the very essence and soul of procrastination. Sir Henry was well aware that he durst not venture an unqualified negative, and endeavored craftily to administer his panacea of precedents, and to propose what he termed “something more orderly in the House, and more sagacious to the Sovereign.” He said he would vote against the amendment—that the business would be better affected by following a precedent in the year 1661, when the Lords and Commons of Ireland appointed commissioners to attend the King—to “supplicate the redress of grievances.”

The die was not cast—and a resistance to the measure was announced and proceeded on. Mr. Scott (Attorney General) affected to support Sir Henry; but as if conscious of his ultimate failure, he appeared almost a new character; the bold audacity of his address degenerated into an insidious plausibility; his arrogance fled without an effort, and for once in his life he was tame, vapid, and equivocal. An ardent spirit now burst forth from every quarter in the House. Mr. Henry Flood, a most prominent personage in Irish history, whose endowments were great, and whose character was distinguished, the Provost—Mr. Ogle, Sir Edward Newnham, and many others, declared their coincidence with the amendment. But though it stated, in true and pathetic language, the miseries Ireland was subject to, by reason of her absentees, if pressed too strongly on the tenderest spot of the interest of Britons, to admit of their concurrence; while, on the other side, it was conceived not to be thoroughly explicit—and not sufficiently pre-emptory—the object was most important, the moment was most critical, and the amendment was exceptional. These difficulties had been foreseen.

Mr. Hussey Burgh (The Prime Sergeant) at length arose from the Treasury bench, with that proud dignity so congenial to his character, and declared, that he would never

support any Government, in fraudulently concealing from a King the right of his people; that the high office which he possessed could hold no competition with his principles and his conscience, and he should consider the relinquishment of his gown only as a just sacrifice upon the altar of his country; that strong statement, rather than pathetic supplication, was adapted to the crisis; and he proposed to Mr. Grattan to substitute for his amendment the following words: "That it is not by *temporary expedients*, that this nation is now to be saved from impending ruin."

The effect of his speech was altogether indescribable, nor is it easily to be conceived by those who were not witnesses of that remarkable transaction; the House, quick in its conception, and rapidly susceptible of every impression, felt the whole force of this unexpected and important secession. The talent, the character, the eloquence of this great man, bore down every symptom of further resistance; many of the usual supporters of Government, and some of the Viceroy's immediate connections, instantly followed his example, and in a moment the victory was decisive—not a single negative could the Minister procure, and Mr. Burgh's amendment passed unannouncedly, amidst a tumult of joy and exultation.

This triumph of Irish patriotism made an instantaneous and powerful impression on the minds of the people, it was their first victory, and the Minister's first discomfiture. The volunteers attributed this unexpected success to the impressions which their spirit had diffused throughout the country, and they determined to adopt this measure, as if it had been their own offspring, and thereby identify the virtues of the Parliament with the energies of the people. On the circumstance being announced, the drums beat to arms; the volunteer associations collected in every part of the metropolis; and they resolved to line the streets and accompany to the gates of the Castle that part of the legislative body which moved in solemn procession, to present their wholesome warning into the hands of the Viceroy.

The secession of Mr. Burgh from the Government was not more important than that of M. Conolly, brother-in-law to the Viceroy, and Mr. Burton Cunningham, a constant supporter of the ministerial measures—men in high estimation and of large fortunes—which gave Mr. Grattan an oppor-

tunity for observing, that "the people were just getting *landed security* for the attainment of their liberties."

The effect of this measure, though in its nature inconclusive, appeared to lay the first stone of Irish independence, and greatly increased both the numbers and confidence in Volunteer associations.

Several attempts had previously been made to fix the attention of the British legislature on the distressed and dangerous situation of Ireland, but every effort had proved totally abortive. Although the critical state of that country had been discussed in both Houses of Parliament, and addresses had been voted to the King requesting his immediate attention to the affairs of Ireland, to which favorable answers had been returned by his Majesty; and though the Irish Commons had also framed a resolution, in the language of more than common expostulation, yet the subject passed away from the attention of the Ministers, and even this session closed, affording only further and decided proofs of their temporizing duplicity.

Great Britain was not as yet sufficiently alarmed to become just; she could not as yet be persuaded that the Irish people were competent to the redress of their own grievances; and she considered the warmth of their public declarations only as the brilliant flashes of a temporary patriotism.

Her egotism blinded her to her state and she fancied that the same *revolution* which had confirmed *her* liberties, had subjected to her power the liberties of her sister; and still paramount to justice and to policy, she felt too proud to bend her attention to the grievances which she herself had inflicted.

Some powerful friends of Ireland at length began zealously to espouse her interests. The good Earl Nugent, whose memory and character are still revered by those who recollect the sincerity of his attachment to that country in 1778, made an effort in the British Lords to call their attention to the distresses of Ireland; but his efforts were ineffectual. The same nobleman soon after repeated the same efforts; but his weight and abilities were not equal to his zeal and integrity. His motion was treated with an unbecoming superciliousness by Lord North, and death unfortunately, soon after, deprived his country of one of the truest friends and most dignified and honest advocates

The Earl of Shelburne, in the Lords, and the Earl of Up-

per Ossory, in the Commons, also proposed strong resolutions in both Houses, declaratory of the dangerous state of the country. But though the motion was well-timed, the motives of the noble movers did not proceed from the same feeling which actuated the resident inhabitants of Ireland. Neither of those noblemen had been habitual friends to the general interests of that country. Both of them were total absentees—they possessed large estates in Ireland, and trembled for their properties—they acted in general opposition to the Government, and wished to register the culpability of their adversaries. Their motions were, after very sharp debates, rejected in both Houses, and Ireland became fully and finally convinced, that it was not through the occasional exertion of Irish emigrants, in a foreign legislature, that she was to seek for the recovery of her rights and alleviation of her miseries.

Applications to the Government, petitions to the Parliament and supplications to the Crown had all been tried in vain; neither the bold remonstrances of right nor the piercing cries of necessity could reach the royal ear, or penetrate the circle of ministers which surrounded the British throne, and concealed from the Irish King a distinct view of his Irish people. Humble and pathetic language had failed, the voice of the nation was exhausted by unavailing supplication, and it now became full time to act in the cause of liberty.

Such being the ascertained disposition of the whole body of the people, not a moment was to be lost in the adoption of some measure, too strong to be despised by ministers, and too moderate to be dangerous to the connection. Delay might now terminate all the hopes of Ireland, the crisis might pass away, the public spirit might cool, and the moment so auspicious to the interests of the nation might be lost forever. Though this determination quickly circulated throughout the whole country, the people still acted with that deliberate firmness, which, of all conduct, is the most fatal to a political adversary, and adds most strength and character to popular proceedings.

The personages who then led Ireland forward to her bloodless victory, well knew the inestimable value of that prudent principle. They were men of great abilities, profound wisdom, and effective patriotism, which considers activity its necessary friend, but precipitation its almost dangerous enemy. They instructed the people, that while they acted



with undeviating firmness, they should also act with prudential moderation—that the suspended liberties of the people were most likely to be recovered from a powerful oppressor, by a determined but cool and progressive perseverance—that by deliberate system none would be alarmed—wise men would be attended to, the impetuous be restrained, the wavering confirmed, and the people steadied; patriotism and confidence would grow up together and become more intimately blended, and the whole nation without alarm, be imperceptibly led to one common centre, and become more competent to achieve the strongest measures, before they were well aware that they had commenced the preparation for them.

They were instructed, that on the other hand, undigested and impetuous proceedings, if not successful, by the first rapidity of their execution, in general defeat their own object, and rivet the chains of that country which they were intended to emancipate; that it is more practicable to advance on gradual claims than recede from extravagant determinations, and that the inevitable miseries of civil war, however justifiable upon the principles and precedent of constitutional resistance, established at the revolution, should be the last resource even of an enslaved people; and, that though the Irish were armed, and might demand concession in the attitude and tone of confidence, it would be much wiser to give their *incipient* proceedings the weight and character of citizens, and reserve for the last extremity the threat of soldiers; that England, by this means, would be sufficiently informed of the determination of Ireland, without feeling her pride too much hurt, to propose a negotiation, or so much alarmed as to prepare for resistance.

This discreet reasoning had its full effect upon the generality of the nation; and though the ebullitions of public feeling occasionally broke forth in ardent resolutions of the Volunteer associations, the temperate system was generally adopted; and it was only upon fully experiencing its final failing, that the exhilarating shouts of an embattled people were heard reverberating from every quarter of a military country.

As before mentioned, public resolutions neither to import, purchase, or consume any British manufacture, or commodity whatever, had been universally but peaceable adopted, throughout the whole island, a measure at all times justifiable by any people who may have been deprived of their com-



merce and their constitution by the power or the machinations of an insidious neighbor.

Inundated as Ireland had been with every species of British manufacture, there could be no step so just, so moderate, or which promised so many beneficial consequences, as the total exclusion from the Irish markets of every commodity which she was herself competent to manufacture, or of which she could possibly dispense with the immediate consumption. However, it was not until after the grievances of Ireland could be no longer endured, and she found that nothing but propositions, without sufficient latitude to be beneficial, or security to be permanent, were offered for her acceptance, that these resolutions became almost universal—spread themselves like a rapid flame throughout every village of the island—and were zealously promoted by almost every individual in the country. At length a general meeting was convened by the High Sheriffs of the city of Dublin, and resolutions then entered into by the whole metropolis, which finally confirmed and consummated that judicious measure, and at length convinced Great Britain that Ireland would no longer submit to insult and domination, and had commenced a gradation of active proceedings of which the climax might ultimately, though unfortunately, produce a rupture of the connection.

These resolutions were enforced with rigor and strictness. Few men, however their interest might be affected, would wantonly risk the imputation of being traitors to their country and encounter the danger of popular retribution which was, in some few instances, actually inflicted.

The nation now paused for a moment: it found itself prepared to commence its great work of constitutional regeneration, and stood steadily and firmly watching with an anxious eye for the operation of this first overt act of determined patriotism. The people had now ascended an eminence sufficiently elevated to give them a full view of their friends and of their enemies—they had peaceably hoisted the first standard and made the first proclamation of liberty. A mutual compact of the citizen to support the soldier, and the soldier to defend the citizen, formed a very remarkable feature in all their resolutions—and though the military associations had not (as such) yet assumed a deliberative capacity, it was obvious that their discretion alone had continued the

distinction—and that, though they spoke by two tongues, there was in fact but one heart amongst the people.

This bold measure, however it may have been eclipsed by the more striking importance of events which succeeded each other in a rapid progression, yet had a momentous influence on the subsequent fate and policy of Ireland, and must be considered as the commencement of that interesting course of political transactions, which suddenly raised her to the highest pitch of national pride and prosperity, and afterwards hurled her down the destructive precipice of misery and degradation.

The spirited adoption and obstinate adherence of the Irish people to these resolutions now flashed as a new light in the eyes of the British administration. The power of the English statutes, which bound the commerce of Ireland, was by these resolutions almost at the same moment denied and demolished, without the aid of arms or tumult of insurrection, and the pride and power of Great Britain received that warning blow which taught her what she had reason to expect from a further perseverance in her favorite system. The Ministry were astonished. The arm of usurpation, which had so long wielded alternately the sword and commanded the coffer, fell paralyzed and lifeless by the side of the usurpers. But the fate of empires is governed by the same fatality as the checkered life of individuals; and this very measure, which so auspiciously and proudly asserted, and the events which afterwards so completely acquired the constitutional independence and commercial freedom of Ireland, will be found the ulterior pretence for revoking those great acquirements. England, compelled to concede, was determined to reclaim, and from the first hours of reluctant concession pursued that deep and insidious system which will be fully traced and developed in the course of Irish transactions, and will be found conspicuously active from the commercial tariff of 1784 through every stage of the regency and the rebellion, to the completion of that measure entitled a legislative Union between the two countries.

The Volunteer associations of the metropolis soon perceived that however numerous their force and extensive their popularity it required some strong link of connection to unite military bodies so entirely distant and independent of each

other, who acknowledged no superior to their respective commanders and no control but voluntary obedience.

To secure their unanimity, perhaps even their permanence, it required some consolidating authority whose weight might restrain within proper limits the uncontrolled spirits of a body assuming the double capacity of a soldier and of a citizen.

This essential object could only be attained by the selection of some high and dignified personage, whose rank and character, rising beyond the reach of common competition, might unite together, under one common chief, that diversity of views and objects which must ever distract the proceedings of detached associations.

The Volunteers of Dublin saw clearly that military bodies, however laudable their views, must be more than commonly subject to the fallibility of human institutions, and that to have the effect and impetus of an army they must submit themselves fully to its control and organization.

They did not, however, long hesitate in their choice of a commander. Every eye seemed to turn, by general instinct, on William, Duke of Leinster. His family from the earliest periods had been favorites of the people. He had himself, when Marquis of Kildare, been the popular representative of Dublin; he was the only Duke of Ireland; his disposition and his address combined almost every quality which could endear him to the nation. The honesty of his heart might occasionally mislead the accuracy of his judgment, but he always intended right, and his political errors usually sprung from the principle of moderation.

This amiable Nobleman was therefore unanimously elected by the armed bodies of the metropolis their General, and was immediately invested with all the honors of so high a situation; a guard of Volunteers was mounted at his door, a bodyguard appointed to attend him on public occasions, and sentinels placed in his box when he honored the theater. He was followed with acclamations whenever he appeared, and something approaching to regal honors attended his investiture.

This was the first measure of the Volunteers towards the formation of a regular army. Its novelty and splendor added greatly to its importance and led the way to the subsequent appointments which soon after completed their organization.

The mild and unassuming disposition of the Duke, tending by its example to restrain the over zeal of an armed and irritated nation, did not contribute much to increase the energy of their proceedings and at no distant period deprived him, for a moment, of a portion of that popularity which his conduct (with but little deviation) entitled him to, down to the last moments of his existence.

A new scene now presented itself to the view of the British Minister, and embarrassed, to an unparalleled degree, every measure of the Irish administration. A regular army, composed of every rank of society, raised, armed, and disciplined in the midst of the metropolis, independent of the Crown, and unconnected with the Government, disdaining all authority of either over their military concerns, and under the eye of the Viceroy, appointing a commander in chief and avowing their determination to free their country or perish in its ruins, the standing army tame spectators of this extraordinary spectacle and almost participating in the flame which they might be called upon to extinguish, the Government, irresolute and shrinking within the Castle, not only tolerated but even affected to countenance this unparalleled procedure. The new commander of the Volunteers was received and recognized by the public authorities, and the regular soldiery at length involuntarily paid him the same military attentions as their own commanders.

But though the Government, from policy, affected to bear the sight with complacency and patience, they reflected, with the deepest solicitude, on the situation of the country, and secretly made every effort to divide or weaken the military associations. Every device was used to seduce the soldier from his officers, or to detach the most popular officers from the command of the soldiers. The one was offered commissions and pay from the Crown, the other offices in the public departments. No scheme was left untried; no means were forgotten to achieve this object; but it was all in vain. The spirit of the people was then too high, and their patriotism too ardent to admit of such negotiation, and every attempt became not only futile but also gave an additional strength to the measures and declarations of the people.

The appointment of the Duke of Leinster to the command of the Volunteers of the metropolis was quickly followed by that of other district generals, and the organization of four



provincial armies was regularly proceeded on. The country gentlemen of the highest consideration and largest fortune vied with each other in their efforts to promote it, many leading members of the Irish Parliament were individually active in promoting the common object, and from single corps were soon collected county regiments and provincial armies ready to take the field at the command of their officers, and to sacrifice their lives and their properties for the emancipation of their country.

Still, however, something was wanting to complete their organization. Provincial armies had been formed and disciplined, but still these armies were independent of each other. There was no general head to put the whole in motion—no individual to whom all would own obedience, and such an appointment seemed indispensably essential to secure their co-operation.

But this was a task more serious and more difficult than had yet occurred. Where could be found the man whose integrity was incorruptible, whose wisdom was profound, whose courage was invincible, yet whose moderation was conspicuous, and whose popularity was extensive? Ireland could not boast a Washington, yet so critical was her situation at that moment that a combination of all these qualities seemed to be requisite in the person to whom should be entrusted the guidance of eighty thousand patriot soldiers. Such a personage was not to be discovered, and it was only left to the Volunteers to select the purest character of that day, and leave his guidance to the councils less of the concurring than of the counteracting qualities of the inferior commanders.

Public affairs in Ireland now began to wear a serious and alarming aspect. The Leinster army appointed the Earl of Charlemont its commander in chief, and the other armies proceeded rapidly to their organization. Provincial reviews were adopted and every thing assumed the appearance of systematic movement.

The elevation of Lord Charlemont to that high command, though it formed a more decided military establishment for the Volunteer army, was probably the very means of preserving the connection between the two countries. Had the same confidence and command been entrusted to a more ardent or ambitious character, it might have been difficult to calculate on the result of combining an intemperate leader with an



impatient army, but the moderation of Lord Charlemont gave a tone and a steadiness to the proceedings of the people which might otherwise have pointed to a distinct independence. His character had long preceded his elevation. In the north his influence was unlimited, and though the Southern and Western Volunteers had not as yet consolidated their force with the other provinces, they were in a high state of discipline and preparation, and soon adopted the same principles, which the appointment of the Earl of Charlemont had now diffused through the other parts of the Nation.

From the first moment that James, Earl of Charlemont, embarked in Irish politics, he proved himself to be one of the most honest and dignified personages that can be traced in the annals of Irish history. The love of his country was interwoven with his existence; their union was complete, their separation impossible; but his talents were rather of the conducting class, and his wisdom of a deliberative nature. His mind was more pure than vigorous, more elegant than powerful, and his capacity seemed better adapted to counsel in peace than to command in war.

Though he was not devoid of ambition, and was proud of his popularity, his principles were calm, and his moderation predominant. For some years at the head of a great army in the heart of a powerful people, in the hand of an injured nation, during the most critical epoch that a kingdom ever experienced, he conducted the Irish nation with incredible temperance and, in the midst of tempests, he flowed on in an unruffled stream, fertilizing the plain of liberty and enlarging the channel of independence, but too smooth and too gentle to turn the vast machinery of revolution.

His view of political objects, though always honest, was frequently erroneous. Small objects sometimes appeared too important and great ones too hazardous. Though he would not actually temporize, he could be seduced to hesitate; yet, even when his decision was found wandering from the point of its destination, it was invariably discoverable that discretion was the seducer.

Had the unwise pertinacity of England persisted in her errors, and plunged his country into more active contest, his mildness, his constitution and his love of order would have unadapted him to the vicissitudes of civil commotion, or the energetic promptitude of military tactics; but fortunately

the adoption of his counsels rendered his sword unnecessary; and by the selection of one man, to combat for the liberties of Ireland, he raised a youthful champion for his country whose sling soon leveled the giant of usurpation, and he wound a laurel round the bust of the deliverer, which will remain unfaded till the very name of Ireland shall be obliterated from amongst nations.

His indisposition to the extent of Catholic liberty, nourished by the prejudice of the times, was diminished by the patriotism of the people. The Catholics of 1780 preferred their country to the claims, as those of 1800, preferred their claims to their country, and amongst that people he gained by his honesty what he lost by his intolerance and lived just long enough to experience and to mourn the fallibility of his predictions.

Around this Nobleman the Irish Volunteers flocked as around a fortress; the standard of liberty was supported by his character; the unity of the Empire was protected by his wisdom; and as if Providence had attached him to the destinies of Ireland, he arose—he flourished—and he sunk with his country.



Composed from the Book of Kells.

## CHAPTER V.

### HUMILIATION OF THE ENGLISH GOVERNMENT—THE VOLUNTEERS GATHER STRENGTH.

The British Government at length awakened from their slumbers; their dreams of power and security now vanished before the view of their increasing dangers. A reliance on the omnipotence of English power, at all times chimerical, would now have been presumptuous. The Irish nation, to whose bravery and whose blood the victories and conquests of Britain had been so eminently indebted, now called imperatively for their own rights and demanded a full participation of that constitution in support of which they had daily sacrificed so great a proportion of their treasure and their population.

The Irish soldier and the Irish seaman could never be supposed to remain unfeeling spectators whilst their own country was struggling for its dearest liberties, or become the mercenary instruments of their own subjugation. Even their indisposition to the British service would have reduced the armies and navy to debility, but their defections would have been fatal to the power of Great Britain, and have enabled Ireland irresistibly to effect her total independence. The balance of Europe was likely to undergo a great change; the improvident attachment to continental politics almost exclusively engrossed the attention of England; and the completion of a mercenary league with a petty potentate of a Germanic principality, inferior even to one Irish county, was considered of more importance by the British Cabinet, than all the miseries, the dangers, and oppressions of Ireland. But the British Government now perceived their error, when it was too late to temporize; and that arrogance, which for centuries had hardly condescended to hear groans, was now startled into attention.

Affairs now approached fast towards a crisis. The freedom of commerce being the subject most familiar and comprehensible to the ideas of the people, was the first object of their solicitude. "A Free Trade" became the watchword of the Volunteers and the cry of the Nation. The Dublin Volunteer

Artillery appeared on parade, commanded by James Napper Tandy, with labels on the mouths of their cannon of "Free Trade or Speedy Revolution", placards were pasted up in every part of the city to the same effect, until the determined proceedings of all ranks and classes of the people, connected with the operation of the non-important agreements, left no further room for ministerial procrastination.

The British Minister now became alarmed, and trembled for the consequences of his political intolerance. He had no passage to retreat by and after every struggle which circumstances could admit of, the British Cabinet at length came to a resolution, that "something must be done to tranquilize Ireland." The King was informed of their determination, and was prevailed upon to accede to it. His Majesty had received a severe shock by the unexpected events of the American contest, and the additional mortification of compulsory concessions to Ireland was little calculated to tranquilize his feelings. However, absolute necessity required his acquiescence and it was finally determined, by the executive Power of Great Britain, to adopt means if not altogether to satisfy, at least to conciliate and to concede considerably to Ireland.

From this determination, the affairs in the British Empire began to wear a new aspect; the day was fast approaching when England, for the first time, must condescend to acknowledge her own errors, and in the face of Europe, to humble herself before a people, who had for six centuries been the slaves of her power rather than the subjects of her affection.

Lord North had now a more difficult task to perform than he at first conceived, to recant his avowed principles, to humble the pride of his own country, and submit to the justice of another, and above all, to justify his own conduct, which had reduced both countries to that state which required those concessions, an awful lesson to all Governments, how cautiously they should arrogate to themselves a dominion, of which the basis was power and the superstructure injustice.

But all subterfuge had ended, and on the 24th of November, 1782, his Majesty ascended the throne to proclaim his first substantial act of grace to the Irish nation, and to call the immediate attention of his British Parliament to the situation of that country, but his Majesty obviously insinuated that his attention to Ireland was attracted by a consideration for the safety of Great Britain and that the benefits to be extended

to Ireland should be only such as would be for the common interest, not of Ireland abstractedly, but of all his dominions, and by that very act of conceding to Ireland, he virtually asserted the supremacy of the British Parliament.

This speech was immediately attended to by the British Parliament; the opposition received it as a triumph over the Minister, and gladly acceded to a declaration which proclaimed the imbecility and misconduct of the Cabinet. An actual insurrection in Ireland—the certain consequence of further inattention—would have certainly deprived the Minister of his station, and perhaps eventually of his head.

A coincidence of events thus united two hostile interests in one honest object; and Ireland was destined to receive, through the ambition of one party, and the error of another, those rights which she had so long in vain solicited from their justice.

This speech was immediately followed by the measures recommended by his Majesty, and the same Parliament which had so repeatedly withheld the just rights of Ireland, now thought that they could not too hastily accede to her claims; and hardly a day was omitted, till the proposed arrangement was proceeded on.

Messages were sent over to Ireland to announce the happy tidings to the people, and emissaries were dispersed over every part of the kingdom, to blazon the liberality and justice of Great Britain.

The Minister, however, justly suspecting, that so soon as the paroxysm of Irish gratitude, for this unaccustomed condescension should subside, and give way to calm reflection, that nation could not avoid perceiving, that until their constitution became independent, and that the usurpation of England should be altogether acknowledged, these favors could have no stability, and might be revoked at a more favorable opportunity, by the same authority which originally conceded them.

To obviate these feelings, the Minister continued the Committee on Irish affairs open from time to time, now and then passing a resolution in favor of that country, and thus endeavoring to wear out the session, which he no doubt, intended should terminate his favors.

The whole nation at length perceived the duplicity of proceedings which, while they purported to extend benefits



to Ireland, asserted the paramount authority of Great Britain, and converted its acts of concession into declaratory statutes of its own supremacy.

Reasoning of this nature soon made a deep impression on the public mind, and meetings were held throughout the kingdom to declare the national feeling on this important subject; fourteen counties at once avowed their determination to tear down these barriers which excluded them from a full participation of the British constitution, and to establish at the risk of their lives and fortunes, the independence of the Irish legislature, beyond the power of British re-assumption.

This spirit and this determination spread themselves universally amongst the people; the cry of "Free Trade" was now accompanied with that of "Free Parliament," and that patriotic enthusiasm which had so effectually asserted the commerce of Ireland, now arose with double vigor to assert its constitution.

The Volunteer army, in the meantime, rapidly advanced in discipline and numbers; the success which had attended this first effort of their steadiness acted as a powerful incitement to the continuation of their exertion; they felt, with exultation, that at the very time they were in arms, without the authority of the Crown, or control of their Sovereign, his Majesty, from his throne, condescended to pass unqualified eulogiums on the loyalty and fidelity of the people; expressions which, if considered with reference to the King, were gracious; but with reference to the Government, which framed them, were clearly intended as an anodyne to lull that spirit which durst not be encountered.

Provincial reviews of the Volunteer armies were now adopted, and a more regular staff appointed to the general officers; new trains of artillery were formed, that of Belfast was brought to considerable perfection. Earl Charlemont was called on to review the Northern army; on his tour he was attended by many persons of the highest distinction, and his suite had all the appearance of military dignity and national importance. His Lordship returned to review the Leinster corps in Dublin. His aides-de-camp were men of the highest character and of the first ability. Barry Yelverton, Hussey Burgh and Mr Grattan, were on his staff.

The Volunteer army had acquired the discipline of an efficient force, and at that period amounted to above eighty

thousand soldiers, ready for actual service, aided by the zeal, the prayers, and the co-operation of nearly five millions unarmed inhabitants.

The British Government, which had supposed that enough had been done, if not to satisfy, at least somewhat to disunite the Irish people, now perceived how ill they had calculated on the character of that nation, and felt, with pain and disappointment, the futility of their designs, and the feebleness of their authority.

Grave and most important circumstances now opened to the public view, and imperatively concurred to put the constitutional claims of Ireland directly in issue with the British legislature.

The army in Ireland had been under the regulations of a British statute, and the hereditary revenue of the Crown with the aid of a perpetual mutiny bill, enabled the British Government to command at all times a standing army in Ireland, without the authority or the control of its Parliament.

This unconstitutional power, hitherto almost unnoticed in Ireland now that the principles of liberty had been disseminated amongst the people, and that an independent army of Irishmen had been organized, became a subject of general dissatisfaction. Some patriotic magistrates determined to make a stand upon that point, and to bring the legality of the British statutes, as operating in Ireland, into issue, through the medium of their own conduct, in refusing to obey them.

To effect this measure, they determined to resist the authority of the British mutiny act, and by refusing to billet soldiers, under the provisions of that statute, solicited complaints against themselves, for the purpose of trying the question.

This measure would at once have put Ireland and the usurpation of Great Britain in direct issue; but the Irish judges were then dependent upon the Crown; they held their offices during pleasure only; judges might differ with the juries, the people with them both, and the result of a trial of such a question in such a way, was considered by all parties as too precarious to hazard the experiment.

The career of independence, however, proceeded with irresistible impetuosity; a general feeling arose that a crisis was fast approaching, when the true principles of the Irish constitution must be decisively determined.

Though the regular forces and the Volunteer army were on the most amicable terms, yet jealousies might eventually be widened into a breach, pregnant with the most disastrous consequences. This was an extremity the Viceroy determined to avoid, and orders were issued to the army to show every possible mark of respect to the Volunteers; their officers received the usual military salute from the regular soldiers, and at the request of the Volunteers a few troops of cavalry were ordered by the Lord Lieutenant to assist in keeping the Volunteer lines at a review in the Phoenix Park. But an accidental circumstance some time afterwards occurred, which showed the necessity for cultivating that cordiality, on the continuation of which the tranquillity of the nation so entirely depended

Lieutenant Doyne, of the second regiment of Horse, marching to relieve the guards in Dublin Castle at the head of the cavalry, came accidentally on Essex Bridge, directly at right angles with a line of Volunteer infantry commanded by Lord Altamont. An instant embarrassment took place; one party must halt or the other could not pass; neither would recede—etiquette seemed likely to get the better of prudence—the cavalry advanced; the Volunteers continued their progress till they were nearly in contact; never did a more critical moment exist in Ireland. Had one drop of blood been shed, through the impetuosity of either officer, even in that silly question of precedence, the Irish Volunteers would have beat to arms, from north to south, in every part of the kingdom, and British connection would certainly have been shaken to its very foundation.

As the cavalry advanced, Lord Altamont commanded his corps to continue their march, and incline their bayonets, so as to be ready to defend their line. The cavalry officer, wisely reflecting, that by the pause even of a single moment, every possibility of disagreement would be obviated, halted his men for an instant; the Volunteers passed on, and the affair ended without further difficulty.

This circumstance, however trivial, was quickly circulated, and increased the public clamor. Resolutions were entered into by almost every military corps, and every corporate body, that they would no longer obey any laws, save those enacted by the Kings, Lords, and Commons of Ireland; and this spirit gradually embraced the whole population, till at length it

ended in the celebrated resolutions of Dungannon, which established the short lived independence of the nation.

William, Duke of Leinster, had long been the favorite and the patron of the Irish people, and never did the physiognomist enjoy a more fortunate elucidation of his science; the softness of philanthropy, the placidity of temper, the openness of sincerity, the sympathy of friendship, and the ease of integrity, stamped corresponding impressions on his artless countenance, and left but little to conjecture as to the composition of his character.

His elevated rank and extensive connections gave him a paramount lead in Irish politics, which his marked talents would not otherwise have justified; though his capacity was respectable, it was not brilliant, and his abilities were not adapted to the highest class of political pre-eminence. On public subjects his conduct sometimes wanted energy, and his pursuits perseverance; in some points he was weak, and in some instances erroneous, but in all he was honest; from the day of his maturity to the moment of his dissolution he was the undeviating friend of the Irish nation; he considered its interests and his own indissolubly connected; alive to the oppressions and miseries of the people, his feeling heart participated in their misfortunes, and felt the smart of every lash which the scourge of power inflicted on his country. As a soldier and as a patriot he performed his duties, and in his plain and honorable disposition was found collected a happy specimen of those qualities which best compose the character of an Irish gentleman

He took an early and active part in promoting the formation and discipline of the Volunteer associations; he raised many corps and commanded the Dublin Army. The ancient celebrity of his family, the vast extent of his possessions, and his affability in private intercourse, co-operated with his own popularity in extending his influence, and few persons ever enjoyed a more general and merited influence amongst the Irish people.

The Irish Catholics, at this period, were much attached to the Geraldines, and pursued a conduct so meritorious that even the bitterest enemies of that body acknowledged the uncommon merit of their conduct; their open friends multiplied, their secret enemies diminished, and they gradually worked themselves into the favor and confidence of their Protestant countrymen, though loaded with severe restrictions, though



put out of the pale of the British constitution, and groaning under the most cruel and unjust oppression, they were active and patriotic; they forgot the tyranny under which they groaned, and only felt the chains which fettered and oppressed their country, a general union of all sects seemed to be cementing, the animosity of ages was sinking into oblivion, and it was reserved for the incendiaries of a later period to revive that barbarous sectarian discord; a weapon, without which the British Government would have ever found Ireland too proud for the influence of power, and too strong for the grasp of annexation.

The doctrine of pure democracy was then but a weak exotic, to which the heat of civil war in America had given the principle of vegetation. In Ireland it was uncongenial to the minds, and unadapted to the character of the people; and during the whole progress of those events, which preceded the attainment of Irish independence, its progress was only observable in the intimate association of the distant ranks in military bodies, and the idea of a revolution never extended further than to attain the undisturbed enjoyment of a free Parliament and to remove forever the ascendancy of the British Government over the crown of Ireland.

Notwithstanding all these occurrences, the British people, in their nature jealous and egotistical, still remained obstinately blind to the true state of Ireland enjoying the blessings of independence, under a resident monarch and an unfettered Parliament; they felt interested only in their own aggrandizement; their solitude extended only to their own concerns; and without reflecting that the same advantages which they so liberally possessed, were denied to Ireland, they attributed the uneasiness of that nation rather to innate principles of disaffection, than the natural result of misery and oppression.

Every element of a free constitution had been torn away by the rough hand of a foreign legislature, enacting laws, to which the representatives of the Irish people were utter strangers. Yet this usurpation had been sanctioned by the dictum of a British judge, who added to his reputation, by giving an unqualified opinion for Irish slavery.

The salaries of the judges of Ireland were then barely sufficient to keep them above want, and they held their offices only during the will of the British Minister, who might remove them at his pleasure; all Irish justice, therefore, was at his control. In all questions between the Crown and the people,



the purity of the judge was consequently suspected; if he could not be corrupted, he might be cashiered, the dignity of his office was lost in his dependence, and he was reduced to the sad alternative of poverty or dishonor; nor was this grievance lessened by many of the judges being sent over from England, prejudiced against the Irish, and unacquainted with their customs.

The Irish Parliament at this period, met but once in two years, and in the British Attorney General was vested the superintendence of their proceedings, and in the British Privy Council, the alteration and rejection of their statutes; and the declaration or ruin of her commerce was at least a matter of indifference, if not of triumph, to the British monopolists.

These grievances, in themselves almost intolerable, were greatly aggravated by the abuses which had been creeping into the executive and legislative department of the British Government, and infected every proceeding adopted as to Ireland.

However, the British Government found that resistance had now become impossible, and something more must be done. The Irish Viceroy, therefore, was instructed to act according to the best of his judgment. Accordingly, on the 9th of October, 1781, he, for the first time met the Irish Parliament with a speech from the throne; which, though received with great cordiality by the House, upon a close investigation, appears a composition of the most Jesuitical sophistry; it complimented the country on a prosperity which it never enjoyed; expressed a solicitude for its interest which was never experienced, and promised future favors, which were never intended to be conceded, and was mingled, at the same time with recommendations the most vague, and observations the most frivolous. The good temper of the House, however, was so excited by the cordial assurances it contained, it was received with great approbation, and Mr. John O'Neill, of Shane's Castle, the first Commoner of Ireland, was very wisely prevailed upon, by the Secretary, to move an address of thanks to his Majesty for this gracious communication of his minister with a view that the weight and character of this gentleman might excite that unanimity at the present crisis so very desirable, and which must be so highly advantageous to the Irish Government.

Mr. John O'Neill, descended from the most celebrated

chiefs of ancient Ireland, bore in his portly and graceful mien indications of a proud and illustrious pedigree; the generous openness of his countenance, the grandeur of his person, and the affability of his address, marked the dignity of his character, and blending with the benevolence of his disposition, formed him one of the first Commoners of the Irish nation, a rank from which he so unfortunately sunk, by humbling his name to the level of purchased peerages, and descending from the highest bench of the Commons to the lowest among the Nobles

In public and in private life Mr. O'Neill was equally calculated to command respect, and conciliate affection; high minded, open, and well educated, he clothed the sentiments of a patriot in all the language of a gentleman; his abilities were moderate, but his understanding was sound; unsuspecting, because he was himself incapable of deception, he too frequently trusted to the judgment of others, that conduct which would have been far more respectably regulated by his own, though he did not shrink from the approbation of the court, he preferred the applauses of his country, and formed one of the most perfect models of an aristocratic patriot.

This step, however, was instantly succeeded by a measure, which did honor to the patriotic spirit of Mr. O'Neill, and preserved his character in that station, from which it might have sunk had he concluded his observations, by the fulsome and indecisive address which he had so injudiciously patronized.

As soon as the address to his Majesty has passed, Mr. O'Neill moved a resolution of thanks to "all the Volunteers of Ireland for their exertions and continuance." This motion was received with exultation by the opposition and created a new embarrassment to the Minister. To return thanks to an independent army for their exertions and continuance, which acknowledged no military superiority, and called, with arms in their hands, upon their Irish king to restore their civil rights and plundered constitution, was a step, undoubtedly, not warranted by precedent, but prompt decision was necessary, and the then Mr. John Fitzgibbon, in one of the first efforts of that decided but inconsiderate impetuosity which distinguished him throughout life, harshly opposed Mr. O'Neill's motion, but by endeavoring to support the Government he deeply embarrassed it; and Mr. Scott, the Attorney General, on that occasion showed, in his strongest colors the advantages of well regulated policy. He instantly acceded

to what he could not oppose, and gave an appearance of full approbation on the part of the Government, to an address of thanks to those men, whom nothing but that political duplicity which he so amply possessed, could have induced him to consent to.

All opposition to the motion, therefore, fell to the ground. Mr. Fitzgibbon, who, however, never relinquished an object, from a conviction of its impropriety, though he persisted in his opposition, was reluctantly necessitated to give way, and an address to the armed Volunteers of Ireland was unanimously voted, and directed to be circulated throughout all Ireland, and to be communicated by the Sheriffs of the counties to the corps within their bailiwicks.

Never had a measure been adopted which gave so sudden and singular a change to the aspect of affairs in Ireland. It seemed to reverse all the maxims of former Governments, and gave to the people an ascendancy they had never expected. It legalized a military levy, independent of the Sovereign, and obliged the Ministers to applaud the exertions and court the continuance of an army whose dispersion was the leading object of all their councils.

This resolution made a considerable progress towards the actual emancipation of the Irish people; it brought down the British Government to the feet of the Volunteers, and raised the Volunteers above the supremacy of Britain, by a direct Parliamentary approbation of self-armed, self-governed, and self-disciplined associations, whose motto bespoke the fundamental principle of revolution of which England had given the precedent.

It also taught the people the strength of their own arms and the timidity of their opponents. They perceived, by the unanimous adoption of this resolution, that the people had only to march, and as certainly to conquer. It was, in fact, a flag of truce from the Minister, and proved to the world, that unable to contend he was preparing to capitulate.

In reflecting on the circumstances which led the Government to this concession, observations on the moral and physical strength of the nation must naturally occur. The Irish nation, saturated with patriotic spirit, by a union of its mental and corporeal energies, had united in its narrow focus all the moral and physical powers of which a people are susceptible.



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE CONVENTION AT DUNGANNON—THE DECLARATION OF IRISH RIGHTS.

An explicit and detailed declaration of the people's rights was now demanded in every part of the nation; the press teemed with publications on the subjects best calculated to call patriotism into activity; the doctrines of Swift, of Molyneux, and of Lucas, were re-published in abstract pamphlets and placed in the hands of every man who could read them; their principles were recognized and disseminated; the Irish mind became enlightened, and a revolution in literature was made auxiliary to a revolution in liberty.

Delegates from all the armed bodies of the people were regularly appointed by their respective corps, and met, for the purpose of giving additional weight and importance to their resolves, by conjointly declaring their sentiments and their determination. These meetings, first confined to districts, soon multiplied, and extended themselves to the counties; thence to provinces, and at length to the united nation; their deliberations became regular and public, and their resolutions decisive, and at length the celebrated convention at Dungannon was convoked, which formed a most remarkable incident of Irish history, and one of the wisest and most temperate measures, that ever signalized the good sense, good conduct and the spirit of a people.

The northern counties of Ireland, though not more spirited, more regular and more intelligent than the other provinces, took the lead in this celebrated meeting. The armed associations of Ulster first appointed delegates, to declare the sentiments of their province, in a general assembly; and, on the 15th day of February, 1782, one of the most solemn and impressive scenes which Ireland had ever witnessed, took place in the inconsiderable town of Dungannon.

There were comparatively but few Roman Catholics in the northern counties of Ireland, and still fewer of the strictly Protestant religion. The population of Ulster was principally Dissenters, a people differing in character from the aboriginal inhabitants, fond of reform, and not hostile to equality, ex-



animating the constitution by its theory and seeking a recurrence to original principles, prone to intolerance, without being absolutely intolerant, and disposed to republicanism, without being absolutely republicans; of Scottish origin, they partook of many of the peculiarities of that hard people, penetrating, harshminded, persevering, selfish, frugal, by their industry they acquired individual, and by individual political independence, as brave, though less impetuous than the western and southern Irish, they are more invariably formidable; less slaves to their passions than to their interests, their habits are generally temperate, their dress quaint, blunt, and ungracious, their dialect harsh and disagreeable, their persons hardy and vigorous. With these qualities the northern Irish convoked delegates from twenty-five thousand soldiers to proclaim the sentiments of the Irish people.

This celebrated meeting was conducted with decorum, firmness and discretion unknown to the popular meetings of other times and of other countries. Steady, silent and determined, two hundred delegated Volunteers, clothed in the uniform and armed with the arms of their respective regiments, marched, two and two, to the Church of Dungannon, a place selected for the sanctity of nature, to give the greater solemnity to this memorable proceeding.

The entrance of the delegates into that sacred place was succeeded by an awful silence, which pervaded the whole assembly; the glittering arms of two hundred patriots, for the first time selected by their countrymen, to proclaim the wrongs and grievances of the people, was in itself a scene so uncommon and so interesting, that many of those men, who were ready in a moment to shed the last drop of their blood in the cause of their country as soldiers, were softened into tears, while contemplatively they surveyed that assembly, in which they were about to pledge themselves to measures irrevocably committing Ireland to a conflict with her sister nation—the result of which must determine the future fate of themselves, their children, and their country.

This memorable assemblage of patriotism and discretion, whose proceedings soon became a theme of eulogium throughout every nation of Europe, was composed of men not of an ordinary description, they were generally persons of much consideration—selected for character and abilities—many of them persons of high rank and large fortune, some of them

members of Parliament, and all of them actuated by one heart, filled with one spirit, and determined upon one procedure.

Amongst those who, at this meeting, first distinguished themselves, was Mr Francis Dobbs, who afterwards became a person of singular reputation, the mere incidents of whose life have nothing to engage diffusely the pen of an historian; no great transitions of rank, no deep depressions, no unexpected elevation, no blaze of genius, no acts of heroism distinguished his moderate and peaceable progress through the world, but the extraordinary bent of his understanding, and the whimsical, though splendid extravagances of his eccentric mind introduced him into a notice which the common exercises of his talent would never have affected.

Francis Dobbs was a gentleman of respectable family but of moderate fortune, he had been educated for the bar, where he afterwards acquired some reputation as a constitutional lawyer, and much as a zealous advocate, but his intellect was of an extraordinary description; he seemed to possess two distinct minds, the one adapted to the duties of his profession and the usual offices of society; the other, diverging from its natural centre, led him through wilds and ways, rarely frequented by the human understanding, entangled him in a maze of contemplative deduction from revelation to futurity, and frequently decoyed his judgment beyond the frontiers of reason. His singularities, however, seemed so separate from his sober judgment, that each followed its appropriate occupation without interruption from the other, and left the theologist and the prophet sufficiently distinct from the lawyer and the gentleman.

There were but few virtues he did not, in some degree, partake of, nor were there any vices discernible in his disposition; though obstinate and headstrong, he was gentle and philanthropic, and, with an ardent temper, he was inoffensive as an infant.

By nature a patriot and an enthusiast, by science a lawyer and an historian, on common topics he was not singular, and on subjects of literature was informed and instructed; but there is sometimes a key in the human mind which cannot be touched without sounding those wild chords which never fail to interrupt the harmony of reason, and when expatiating on the subjects of antichrist and the millennium, his whole nature seemed to undergo a change, his countenance bright-

ened up as if by the complacent dignity of a prophetic spirit, his language became earnest, sometimes sublime, always extraordinary and not unfrequently extravagant.

These doctrines, however, he made auxiliaries to his view of politics, and persuaded himself of its application to Ireland and the infallibility of his reasoning. Mankind has an eternal propensity to be seduced by the lure of new sects, and entangled in the trammels of inexplicable mysteries; and problems of theology, in their nature incapable of demonstration, are received with avidity by the greediness of superstition.

Yet on these mysterious subjects Mr. Dobbs seemed to feel no difficulty, he devoted a great proportion of his time to the development of revelation, and attempted to throw strange and novel lights on divine prophecy. This was the string on which his reason seemed often to vibrate, and his position all tended to one extraordinary conclusion.

"That Ireland was decreed by heaven to remain forever an independent state, and was destined to the supernatural honor of receiving the antichrist"; and this he labored to prove from passages of Revelation.

At the Dungannon meeting Mr. Dobbs first appeared as a delegate from the northern Volunteer corps, he was afterwards appointed a member of the national convention of Ireland for the province of Ulster, and will be found throughout the whole course of Irish events, a distinguished and ardent advocate for the constitutional rights of the country.

The deliberations of the Dungannon meeting were continued for several days without interruption or intermission; its discussions were calm and dignified, its resolutions firm, moderate, and patriotic. Every member of that assembly, on taking his seat in the awful hall felt the great importance and novelty of his delegation, as the elected representative of the united civil and military bodies, blending the distinct functions of the armed soldier and of the deliberative citizen, to protect his country against the still more unconstitutional coalescence of a mercenary army and an external legislature.

Colonel Irwin, a northern gentleman of the highest respectability, of a discreet, moderate, and judicious though active, steady, and spirited character, was called to the chair by the unanimous voice of the assembly, and conducted himself in that most important presidency, throughout the whole of the business, with a moderation and a decorum, which

always aid a cause, and never fail to give weight to the claims of a people.

At length, on the 15th of February, 1782, this assembly finally framed and agreed upon that celebrated declaration of rights and of grievances, under which the Irish nation had so long been languishing, and announced to the world the substantial causes by which its commerce had been so long restrained, and every trace of a free constitution almost obliterated.

To give the complexion of constitutional legality to the unprecedented organization of this meeting, it was thought judicious to refer pointedly to the first principle of popular freedom universally admitted, established, and acted upon in England by the Revolution, namely, "the people's rights of preparatory resistance to unconstitutional oppression." The assembly therefore recognized that principle by its first resolution: "That citizens, by learning the use of arms, abandon none of their civil rights," thereby asserting the otherwise questionable legality of a self-created military body, exercising also the deliberative functions of a civil delegation, and boldly bottoming the assertion of that right upon the very same principle which the prince of Orange had used to usurp the throne of England, "the popular expulsion of a tyrannical monarch."

This resolution was also wisely adapted to check all legal proceedings, or even ministerial cavil, as to the constitutionality of their meeting, by putting into direct issue with the British Government a previous question of right, which, if contested, must have drawn into public discussion and controversy the principles of the Revolution and the very tenure of the Crown of England; for the English nation had by that Revolution exploded the doctrine of passive obedience, and acting on that ground, had armed against their own sovereign, and put the sword of popular resistance into the hand of William, to cut away the allegiance of the Irish people even to his own father.

The Dungannon meeting next proceeded to denounce, by subsequent resolutions, as altogether unconstitutional, illegal, and as grievances, all British legislation over Ireland, the law of Poynning, the restraint of Irish commerce, a permanent standing army in Ireland, the dependence of the superior judges on the crown, and consequently on the minister; and



the assembly finally resolved to seek a redress of all those grievances, and invited the armed bodies of the other provinces of Ireland to unite with them in the glorious cause of constitutional regeneration

The most weighty grievances and claims of Ireland were by these means, in the mildest and simplest language without argument or unnecessary observation, consolidated into one plain and intelligible body of resolutions, entered into by delegates from twenty-five thousand Ulster soldiers, and backed by the voice of above a million of inhabitants of that province, combining together the moral and physical strength of one of the strongest quarters of Ireland, all actuated by a fixed and avowed determination to attain redress at every risk of life and fortune, and headed by the highest and most opulent gentlemen of that province, feeling the claims to be equally just and irresistible, and therefore not speculating on success without substantial grounds, or denouncing grievances without solid and just foundation

"Whereas it has been asserted that Volunteers, as such, cannot with propriety debate or give opinions on political subjects, or the conduct of parliaments or public men

"Resolved unanimously, That a citizen, by learning the use of arms, does not abandon any of his civil rights.

"That a claim of any body of men, other than the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland, to make laws to bind this kingdom, is unconstitutional, illegal, and a grievance

"That the power exercised by the privy council of both kingdoms, under pretence of the law of Poyning, is unconstitutional and a grievance

"That the ports of this country are by right open to all foreign countries, not at war with the King, and that any burthens thereupon, or obstructions thereto, save only by the parliament of Ireland, are unconstitutional, illegal and grievances.

"That a mutiny bill, not limited in point of duration from session to session, is unconstitutional and a grievance

"That the independence of judges is equally essential to the impartial administration of justice in Ireland, as in England; and that the refusal or delay of this right to Ireland, makes a distinction where there should be no distinction; may excite jealousy where perfect union should prevail; and is in itself unconstitutional and a grievance.



“That this is our decided and unalterable determination to seek a redress of these grievances; and we pledge ourselves to each other, and to our country, as freeholders, fellow-citizens, and men of honor, that we will, at every ensuing election, support those only who have supported us therein, and that we will use every constitutional means to make such our pursuit of redress, speedy and effectual.

“That as men, and as Irishmen, as Christians, and as Protestants, we rejoice in the relaxation of the penal laws against our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects; and that we conceive the measure to be fraught with the happiest consequences to the union and prosperity of the inhabitants of Ireland.

“That four members from each county of the province of Ulster (eleven to be a quorum) be, and hereby are appointed, a committee till next general meeting, to act for the Volunteer corps here represented, and, as occasion shall require, call general meetings of the province.

“That the said committee do appoint nine of their members to be a committee in Dublin, in order to communicate with such other Volunteer associations in the other provinces, as they may think proper to come to similar resolutions; and to deliberate with them on the most constitutional means of carrying them into effect ”

The truth and simplicity of these resolutions, whilst they defied every imputation of party faction or of revolutionary disloyalty, yet convinced the minister that the Irish people would be no longer trifled with. By the firmness that was observed respecting them, the waverings were steadied, the too moderate roused, and the too ardent moderated, whilst the adverse were deterred by an anticipation of their success. Adapted to almost every class, and to the disposition of almost every character, their effect through all Ireland was electric, and the consequence fully answered the most sanguine hopes, nay wishes, of their framers.

Having passed these resolutions, the assembly adjourned, committing the further procedure to the coincidence and zeal of the other provinces of the nation; and, with a discretion almost unparalleled, a body of patriots, who might in one week have collected a military force, which all the power of England could not then have coped with, and, at the head of an irresistible army in a triumphant attitude, might have dictated their own terms to a trembling government, by their

wise and temperate conduct avoided the horrors of a civil commotion, and deliberately represented to Great Britain the grievances, which, by more hostile proceedings, they could by their own power have redressed in a moment.

When a people are bold enough to throw off oppression, strong enough to resist it and wise enough to be unanimous, they must succeed. Oppression, though clothed in all the haughtiness of arbitrary power, is ever accompanied by the timidity of guilt. On the contrary a just resistance to tyranny, however feeble in its commencement, acquires strength in its progress, the stimulants of rising liberty, like the paroxysms of fever, often communicating a supernatural strength to a debilitated body. Ireland had arrived at that crisis, her natural vigor was rapidly surmounting the malignancy of her disorder, and her dormant powers at once burst forth on an astonished empire, and an embarrassed administration.

By this time the national armed force had greatly increased, not only in numbers, but in respectability, and had improved not only in discipline, but in all the military requisites for a regular and active army.

About that period there were nearly ninety thousand soldiers ready, armed, disciplined, and regimented, burning with impatience for the enjoyment of their liberties, not acting on a wild, enthusiastic impulse, but guided by reason and depending on justice. The conduct of the British parliament had taught them the necessity of national unanimity, the whole population therefore were ready to be embodied if necessity required it, and in one month five hundred thousand active soldiers might have been enrolled for service. They saw clearly that Great Britain, by the consolidation of her strength, had risen to that height of power, which alone protected her from her ambitious neighbors, and that, whilst she kept all her liberty at home for her own consumption, she was able to exercise despotic authority over every other quarter of the world, which she governed. It was therefore only by the same unanimity that Ireland could counteract her; and all the capacities and talents which the Irish people possessed seemed to collect their united strength for the cause of their independence.

They had now, by the constant discussions of political subjects in every rank of society, acquired a capacity of acute reasoning on constitutional controversies; their native eloquence breaking forth at every meeting nourished their native

ardor, and almost every peasant became a public orator. "Kings" (said a private volunteer at one of those provincial assemblies in Leinster) "are, we now perceive but human institutions, Ministers are but human institutions, but Liberty is a right Divine, it is the earliest gift from heaven, the character of our birthright, which human institutions can never cancel, without tearing down the first and best decree of the Omnipotent Creator."

The pulpit, too, from which fanaticism was expelled, did not fail to become auxiliary to the general cause. Some dissenting clergymen in the north of Ireland were particularly eloquent; a passage in one of their sermons deserves to be recorded.

"My brethren and brother soldiers," said the pastor, "let us, by prayer and by humiliation supplicate heaven to grant our attainment of that liberty, without which life is but a prison, and society a place of bondage. Our tutelary providence has permitted that blessing to be so long withheld from us by the corrupt and the unworthy only as a punishment for our past offences, and a trial for our future fortitude and perseverance. But the time of our expiation seems now to have been completed, a bright flame has blazed up amongst the people, and, in the hands of justice, lights them to the plains of Virtue and of Victory. The justice of our cause has drawn down that flame from a superior power, and we may well anticipate, that through its fire, the priests of Baal will soon perish before the altars of the Almighty "

Almost every Irish gentleman had now either raised a military corps, or had enlisted himself in that of his neighbor. Some Roman Catholic gentlemen also took to arms, and raised corps composed solely of persons of that persuasion, whilst many Protestants, relinquishing their prejudices, received their Catholic fellow-subjects into their ranks with cordiality, and the whole nation became almost as a single family. The most profound peace and good conduct signalized the lowest peasantry, the most perfect and effectual police was established, hardly a public crime of any kind was committed without instant detection, and every man of every rank seemed to have adopted one prominent and permanent principle, that of uniting good order, patriotism and firmness.

The love of liberty, however, is often palled by enjoyment; the miseries of former oppression are sometimes forgotten in the views of avarice, or the pursuits of ambition, and there

are too many instances in history of sanguinary contests for the attainment of independence, and voluntarily relapses into the fangs of tyranny. Human nature is subject to inconsistencies, and man cannot counteract the errors of his original formation; but when that inconsistency is the voluntary result of depraved or corrupted principles, the weakness becomes a vice, and the object disgusting. Nor can there be a stronger elucidation of this position, or a more painful comparison of times and persons, than that which will occur in the progress of this narrative, where we shall discover the very same men who, in 1782, were foremost in offering their lives and fortunes to attain the independence of their country, metamorphosed on the Union, eighteen years afterwards, into the veriest slaves of direct and shameless corruption, and publicly selling themselves, their connections and their country, for money, for office or for title. The individual proofs of this are numerous, indisputable and easily produced, and the comparison will afford a wholesome lesson for states and nations to look with more caution and less confidence on the professions of public men, who too frequently remain no longer honest, than till public opinion may safely be encountered by plausible pretences. The shouts of popularity only gratify the momentary vanity of man, whilst successful ambition rewards more substantially his pride, or fills the measure of his avarice. The instances are rare, and therefore more precious, of perfect purity attending public character, without deviation, through the whole course of its career.

Of those who led the Volunteer associations in Leinster, Lord Charlemont, the Duke of Leinster, Mr Grattan, and Mr. Henry Flood had the greatest weight and authority, their popularity was extreme, and it was merited.

To this list may be added the names of many others, particularly Archdall, Stewart, and Brownlow, names that will forever remain engraved on the tablet of Irish gratitude, as belonging to men who remained steady during all the subsequent ordeals through which their unfortunate country was doomed to pass, and formed a striking and melancholy contrast to Altamont and Belvidere, Shannon and Clanricard, Longfield and Nevil, and the crowd of those, whose apostacy, in 1800, has stained the records of Irish history, and tarnished the character of Irish patriotism. A dereliction of public principle can only be accounted for by reflecting that the accomplished politician and polished patriot are no less sus-



ceptible of the debasing passions of the human mind than the most humble and illiterate amongst uncultivated society. High rank and influence oftener expose the dormant errors than multiply the virtues of a public character.

As soon as the Dunganon Volunteers had received the concurrence of the armed associations, the commons house of parliament assumed a new aspect. Its former submission and unqualified adulation to the minister and the lord lieutenant had departed. The old supporters of the government seemed only solicitious how they could diminish their obedience without sacrificing their connection, and every successive debate showed evident symptoms of an approaching and decisive crisis.

The proceedings of the people without doors now began to have their due weight on their representatives within; the whole house appeared forming into new parties, accordingly as they were operated on by different degrees of caution, of timidity, of patriotism, and of interest, the leaders of each party became more conspicuous, and every question, however trivial, confessed the unsteadiness of the government, and betrayed the embarrassment of its supporters.

Fitzgibbon pursued an unvaried course. His haughty and inflexible mind despised the country which he hoped one day to govern. Her release from British domination might also liberate her from his own grasp, and, so long as he could, he uniformly opposed every measure which might tend to her emancipation, save in a few instances, which, by exposing his duplicity, confirmed his character. Perfectly indifferent as to the public, he every day gave fresh proofs of that arbitrary and impetuous talent, which so strongly contributed to bring the nation to its end, and himself to his conclusion, and he often embarrassed the government more by the intemperance of his support than their opponents by the steadiness of their opposition.

The flame reached even those who from office or connection were necessitated to adhere to the measures of government; lowering their usual tone of arrogance and of triumph, they condescended to give reasons for their conduct, and appeared almost to court a supposition that this adherence was compulsory, and their conviction open; while the number was small of those who, looking to the possibility of a termination favorable to the government, and their future interests, still gave them a support, the more acceptable because now



more necessary. But it was too late—negotiation was at an end, the mine was charged, the train laid, the match was burning, the summons was peremptory, and either surrender or explosion was inevitable. At this moment the leading characters all started from their ranks; every party had its chief, and every chief turned his eyes, by almost unanimous assent, to the eloquence and energy of the ardent Grattan. The favorite of the parliament, the terror of the minister, the intimate friend of the ablest men and the indefatigable advocate of his country, he seemed most peculiarly calculated to bring forward some great or decisive measure, which should at once terminate the dangerous paroxysm to which the minds of the whole nation were now worked up, and by its decision inform them whether they were to receive their rights from the justice, or to enforce them by the humiliation of Great Britain.

The period, however, had not quite arrived for this step. Extensive as the abilities of Mr. Grattan were, they had many competitors; jealousies intrude themselves even into the highest minds; the spirit of rivalry is inseparable from great talents; Mr. Grattan's importance was merely individual, and he was then only advancing to that pre-eminence, which he soon after acquired over all competitors. Though it was approaching fast, it was evident that it had not indisputably arrived; it was essential that all those parties in the house should be a little more approximate, before a measure was announced on which unanimity was of vital importance.

So much talent never had before appeared in the Irish senate as at that particular moment; rank and fortune also were in higher estimation there than in England, where both are more common, and consequently less imposing. Eloquence and talents have always had their appropriate weight in a popular assembly; but several members of the Irish parliament, in addition to splendid talents, having great fortune and distinguished rank to recommend them, the commons house was not as yet fully prepared to give so splendid a lead to any individual, who, devoid of these, had nothing to recommend him but his character and his talents.

Those who led their respective parties were all men of eminent abilities or of extensive connections. Flood, Grattan, Brownlow, Burgh, Daly, Yelverton, appeared the most respected or efficient leaders of the opposition; Scott (the attorney general) and Fitzgibbon were the most active and efficient supporters of the government; while Daly, Bagenall, Sir Ed-

ward Newenham, Mr. Joseph Dean and a number of county gentlemen, all dissimilar in habits, and heterogeneous in principles, were grouped together without any particular leader, but always paid a marked deference to the opinions of Mr. Brownlow, whose good sense, large fortune and reasonable efficiency constantly ensured him a merited attention.

A few of these country gentlemen had a sort of exclusive privilege of speaking without interruption, whether they spoke good sense or folly, with reason or without, as suited their whims, or accorded with their capacities. Of this class was Mr Thomas Connolly, who appeared to have the largest personal connection of any individual in the commons house of parliament. He took a principal lead amongst the country gentlemen because he spoke more than any of them, though probably his influence would have been greater if he had remained totally silent. He was a person of very high family, ample fortune, powerful connections, and splendid establishments; friendly, sincere, honorable and munificent in disposition, but whimsical, wrongheaded and positive, his ideas of politics were limited and confused; he mistook obstinacy for independence and singularity for patriotism, and fancied he was a Whig, because he was not professionally a Tory.

Full of aristocracy, he was used by the patriots, when they could catch him, to give weight to their resolutions, and courted by the government, to take advantage of his whimsicality and embarrass the opposition. He was bad as a statesman, worse as an orator. In parliament he gave his opinions at the close of a debate, without having listened to its progress; and attacked measures with a sort of blunt point, which generally bruised both his friends and his opponents. His qualities were curiously mixed, and his principles as singularly blended; and if he had not been distinguished by birth and fortune, he certainly would have remained all his life in obscurity.

This gentleman had an extensive circle of adherents. On some questions he was led away by their persuasions, on others, they submitted to his prejudices, as a bait to fix him on more important occasions; and sometimes he differed unexpectedly from all of them. He was nearly allied to the Irish minister at the discussion of the union, and he followed his lordship's fortunes, surrendered his country, lost his own importance, died in comparative obscurity, and in his person ended the pedigree of one of the most respectable English families ever resident in Ireland.

Many other persons, who distinguished themselves at this period of public trial, will be subjects of observation in the course of this memoir; but scarcely any of them more justly deserve notice than Mr. Yelverton, who was, perhaps, the only public character of those days whose every act could be with ease accounted for, his motives for the act being as palpable as the act was public, and whether his conduct was right or wrong made no difference in this respect, its causes could be traced with equal facility, and he generally struggled as little against the propensities of his nature as any man that ever existed. In this narrative of the concerns of Ireland his name will frequently occur; and as so extraordinary a character can never be forgotten in the minds of his countrymen, it may properly be anticipated

Barry Yelverton, of humble origin, afterwards Lord Avonmore, and successor to Hussey Burgh, as chief baron of the exchequer, had acquired great celebrity as an advocate at the Irish bar, and was at this time rapidly winging his way to the highest pinnacle of honorable notoriety and forensic advancement. He had been elected member of parliament for the town of Carrickfergus, and became a zealous partisan for the claims of Ireland.

It would be difficult to do justice to the lofty and overwhelming elocution of this distinguished man, during the early periods of his political exertions. To the profound, logical, and conclusive reasoning of Flood; the brilliant, stimulating, epigrammatic antithesis of Grattan; the sweet-toned, captivating, convincing rhetoric of Burgh; or the wild fascinating imagery and varied pathos of the extraordinary Curran, he was respectively inferior, but in powerful, nervous language, he excelled them all. A vigorous, commanding, undaunted eloquence burst in rolling torrents from his lips, not a word was lost. Though fiery, yet weighty and distinct, the authoritative rapidity of his language, relieved by the beauty of his luxuriant fancy, subdued the auditor without the power of resistance, and left him in doubt whether it was to argument or to eloquence that he surrendered his conviction.

His talents were alike adapted to public purposes, as his private qualities to domestic society. In the common transactions of the world he was an infant; in the varieties of right and wrong, of propriety and error, a frail mortal; in the senate and at the bar, a mighty giant; it was on the bench that, unconscious of his errors, and in his home unconscious of his

virtues, both were most conspicuous. That deep-seated voice, which with equal power freezes the miser's heart and inflames the ruffian's passions, was to him a stranger; he was always rich and always poor; like his great predecessor, frugality fled before the carelessness of his mind, and left him the victim of his liberality, and of course in many instances a monument of ingratitude. His character was entirely transparent, it had no opaque qualities; his passions were open, his prepossessions palpable, his failings obvious, and he took as little pains to conceal his faults as to publish his perfections.

In politics he was more steady to party than to principle, but evinced no immutable consistency in either; a patriot by nature, yet susceptible of seduction, a partisan by temper, yet capable of instability; the commencement and the conclusion of his political conduct were as distinct as the poles, and as dissimilar as the elements.

Amplly qualified for the bench by profound legal and constitutional learning, extensive professional practice, strong logical powers, a classical and wide ranging capacity, equitable propensities and a philanthropic disposition, he possessed all the positive qualifications for a great judge; but he could not temporize; the total absence of skulful or even necessary caution, and the indulgence of a few feeble counteracting habits, greatly diminished that high reputation, which a cold phlegmatic mien, or a solemn, imposing, vulgar plausibility confers on miserably inferior judges.

But even with all his faults Lord Avonmore was vastly superior to all his judicial contemporaries. If he was impetuous, it was an impetuosity in which his heart had no concern; he was never unkind that he was not also repentant; and ever thinking that he acted with rectitude, the cause of his greatest errors seemed to be a careless ignorance of his lesser imperfections.

He had a species of intermitting ambition, which either led him too far, or forsook him altogether. His pursuits, of course, were unequal, and his ways irregular. Elevated solely by his own talents, he acquired new habits without altogether divesting himself of the old ones. A scholar, a poet, a statesman, a lawyer, in elevated society he was a brilliant wit—at lower tables, a vulgar humorist; he had appropriate anecdote and conviviality for all, and whether in the one or in the other, he seldom failed to be either entertaining or instructive.

He was a friend, ardent, but indiscriminate even to blind-



ness; an enemy, warm, but forgiving even to folly; he lost his dignity by the injudiciousness of his selections and sunk his consequence in the pliability of his nature; to the first he was a dupe, to the latter an instrument; on the whole he was a more enlightened than efficient statesman, a more able than unexceptionable judge, and more honest in theory than the practice of his politics. His rising sun was brilliant, his meridian cloudy, his setting obscure; crosses at length ruffled his temper—deceptions abated his confidence, time tore down his talents, he became depressed and indifferent, and after a long life of chequered incidents and inconsistent conduct, he died, leaving behind him few men who possessed so much talent, so much heart, or so much weakness.

This distinguished man at the critical period of Ireland's emancipation, burst forth as a meteor in the Irish senate, his career in the commons was not long, but it was busy and important; he had connected himself with the Duke of Portland, and continued that connection uninterrupted till the day of his dissolution. But through the influence of that nobleman, and the absolute necessity of a family provision on the question of the Union the radiance of his public character was obscured forever, the laurels of his early achievements fell withered from the brow, and having with zeal and sincerity labored to attain independence for his country in 1782, he became one of the sale-masters in 1800, and mingling in a motley crowd, uncongenial to his native character, and beneath his natural superiority, he surrendered the rights, the franchises and the honors of that peerage to which, by his great talents and his early virtues, he had been so justly elevated.

Except upon the bench, his person was devoid of dignity and his appearance ordinary and mean, yet there was something in the strong, the marked lines of his rough unfinished features, which bespoke a character of no common description; powerful talent was its first trait, fire and philanthropy contended for the next; his countenance, wrought up and varied by the strong impressions of his laboring mind, could be better termed indicatory than impressive; and in the midst of his greatest errors and most reprehensible moments, it was difficult not to respect and impossible not to regard him.



## CHAPTER VII.

### GRATTAN FORCES THE ISSUE—A SPECIAL CALL OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—ENGLISH AND IRISH PARLIAMENTS COMPARED.

Mr. Grattan had prepared and determined to move a general declaration of rights in the House of Commons, and it must have been an object of the utmost importance to the Duke of Portland either to prevent that measure altogether, or obtain at least its postponement until he became better acquainted with the disposition of the principal persons of the country, the full extent of their views, and how far he might be able to assuage the general irritation, without going the full length of their extensive requisitions. It was also of importance to the credit of his administration, that, if possible, he should have the substance of whatever he was authorized to accede to, made known by anticipation, as the liberal act of his government, through his English secretary, rather than brought forward, as the demand of the people, through their Irish advocate. Under these circumstances, an adjournment of parliament was a most desirable object, and he determined to attempt it through the negotiation of Mr. Fitzpatrick, who was at least as sincere a man as his noble employer, and had always expressed himself strongly in favor of the interest of Ireland.

The Duke also felt the great importance of a little breathing-time after his arrival; and both Mr. Fox and Lord Rockingham exerted themselves to obtain that object from the Irish patriots; and under the circumstances in which his Grace stood, it might be supposed that it would have been granted without much hesitation; and in common times and cases it certainly would have been but just, and even in the existing one did not seem altogether unreasonable; for, in fact, did not everything promise a harvest of benefits from the new administration? The avowed and proved enemies of Ireland had retired from office. In their stead at the head of the government was the Marquis of Rockingham; as a man, most excellent; as a statesman, constitutional, honest, liberal; as Secretary of State, Mr. Fox, on the admirable nature of whose public principles eulogium would be surplusage; and for the management of the affairs of Ireland, the Duke of Portland,

accompanied by Colonel Fitzpatrick. A more propitious prospectus could hardly be expected, nor could England furnish many men, on whose tolerating dispositions the Irish nation had more reason to repose. But still it could not be forgotten that they were all Englishmen, and though naturally munificent, honorable and conciliatory, yet necessarily partaking in some degree of those inherent prejudices, which education favors and habits confirm in English minds, unacquainted with the state of their sister country, and, of course, cautious of committing themselves with the one country, by too precipitate and favorable a change of system towards the other. Men the most enlightened on general principles are frequently found feeble on abstract subjects; and Mr. Fox was excusable in his wariness of adopting sudden determinations, repugnant to the theories and practice of all former ministers and former parliaments of Great Britain.

Every proper preliminary, therefore, was adopted by the new ministry to prepare their nation for measures towards Ireland which never were, and never could be, popular in England; and with a view to anticipating the expected proceedings of the Irish parliament, a message was delivered from the King to the British parliament, on the 18th of April, 1782, stating "That mistrusts and jealousies had arisen in Ireland, and that it was highly necessary to take the same into consideration, in order to a final adjustment." This message from the King, when coupled with the address of the British parliament to his Majesty in reply, expressive of "their entire and cheerful concurrence in his Majesty's views of a final adjustment," if they are to be understood in the plain and unequivocal meaning of words and construction of sentences, clearly import the conjoined sentiments of both the British King and British Parliament to proceed to a final adjustment of all differences between the two countries, and this message and reply are here more particularly alluded to, because they form one of the principal points afterwards relied upon in the Irish parliament as decisive against any agitation of the question of a Union. The words final adjustment, so unequivocally expressed by his Majesty, were immediately acted upon by the parliaments of both nations, and the adjustment which took place in consequence of the message was considered by the contracting parties as decisively conclusive and final—as intended to be an indissoluble compact, mutually and definitely ratified by the two nations.

The measure of a Union, therefore, being proposed, and afterwards carried against the will of the people; by the power and through the corruption of the executive authority; after the complete ratification of that contract, and after it had been acted upon for seventeen years, was clearly a direct infringement of that final adjustment—a breach of national faith—an infraction of that constitutional federative compact solemnly enacted by the mutual concurrence of the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland, and the King, Lords, and Commons of Great Britain, in their joint and several legislative capacities.

This message, therefore, forms a predominant circumstance, as applying to the most important subsequent occurrences between the two nations, and as such, should be kept in mind through every event detailed in this memoir. It also leads to some considerations, which, though they may be considered as a digression from the transactions which immediately took place in consequence of the message, are yet of considerable utility in elucidating the respective situation of the two countries, at the time this final adjustment was proposed by the King, and the sense that his Majesty's ministers, eighteen years afterwards, were pleased to give to the word *final*, when they conceived it necessary to argue that it bore, not a positive, but an inclusive import, and could only be construed as giving an indefinite scope for future negotiation.

Previous to the year 1780, the distressed state of Ireland, the law of Poyning, the sixth of George the First, the standing army under a permanent mutiny bill, the dependence of the judges, the absence of the habeas corpus act, the restraints on commerce, and the deprivation of a constitution had often suggested to some of the best friends of Ireland the idea of a complete incorporation of that country with Great Britain, as the only remedy for its accumulated and accumulating grievances and oppressions as the most advantageous measure which could be obtained for Ireland under its then deplorable circumstances; and about the year 1753, and subsequently, several pamphlets of considerable merit were published on this subject, detailing the advantages which Ireland must necessarily have derived from so close and beneficial a connection.

As Ireland was then trampled upon, oppressed, and put down without the power of resistance, or any probable chance of ever obtaining justice; there could be no doubt that almost

any change must have been beneficial; and, in that point of view, a complete union of the two nations would then have been in many respects extremely fortunate for that ruined country. The British parliament had declared itself paramount to that of Ireland. The Irish parliament, tired of ineffectual struggles for even the name of independence, had become indifferent to its fate, and sunk into a state of lassitude and debility, from which, though it was occasionally roused by the sharp stings of oppression, it soon relapsed into its own apathy, partly through despair and partly through corruption, while the people, kept systematically ignorant, and of course having but little public mind and less public information, were naturally indifferent to the existence of a representative assembly, of which they neither felt the honor nor experienced the utility.

But at that period England was too powerful, too jealous, and too haughty to equalize her constitution and her commerce, with what she considered as a conquered country. She had then no object to obtain from a captive who lay groaning at her feet, picking up the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. The prejudiced, contracted and fallacious views which England then took of the state of Ireland, deceived her as to her own interests, connected with the general strength and prosperity of the whole empire, and every idea of an incorporate union with Ireland was rejected with disdain by the British nation. England had united herself with Scotland to avoid the chance of a total separation which it was more than probable might otherwise have been the consequence of distinct dynasties; but the state of Ireland and the nature of her federal connection with England occasioned no risk of such an event, and therefore created no such uneasiness or necessity, and the idea seemed to have been totally relinquished by both countries—by the one, because she was too haughty and avaricious to grant, by the other because she was too poor and too dejected to obtain so advantageous an arrangement.

But when Ireland, by the causes heretofore detailed, had been awakened to a sense of her own strength, and a knowledge of her own resources; when America had shown her the example of perseverance, and the possibility of obtaining justice, every idea of annexation to England vanished like the passing wind; liberty was attainable, prosperity must follow liberty, and, in 1782, there was scarcely an Irishman who would not have sooner sunk under the ruins of his country



than submit to a measure which, a few years before, was an object at least of indifference. England too late perceived its error, a union in 1753 would have effectually ended all claims of an independent constitution by Ireland in 1782, and would have been an object of the highest importance to Great Britain; but now it was a word she durst not even articulate; the very sound of it would have been equal to a declaration of hostilities, and however indisposed the new ministers of England might have been to admit all the claims of Ireland, the words "final adjustment," so emphatically used by his Majesty, left no room to suppose that a union could be in contemplation, or ever afterwards be insisted upon; and yet it is singular that the very same words, "final adjustment," were repeated by the Irish minister, when a union was proposed to the Irish parliament in 1800 for its consideration.

So many arguments afterwards arose from that expression, so many sophistical constructions were placed on his majesty's message, so much duplicity did his ministers attribute to his language, that it is impossible to believe that all the ministers of that day were unreservedly sincere as to the finality of the arrangement made with Ireland under its then commanding attitude, and it reminds us of one very remarkable truism of Irish history, that no compact had ever before been entered into between the two countries, that had not been infringed or attempted to be infringed by England, when her power enabled her to withdraw from her engagements.

Nothing can more clearly elucidate the public conduct of the Duke of Portland. In 1782, he came to Ireland to consummate a final adjustment between the two nations, and in pursuance of such proposal, a final adjustment was apparently effected, passed by the parliament of both nations, confirmed by the honor of Great Britain, and sanctified by the faith of Majesty. The Duke of Portland was the accredited agent of that final adjustment, the responsible minister of both nations, the official voucher of its perpetuity and, therefore, should have been the guardian of that independence, which was effected through himself, and declared by him, as viceroy, to be final and conclusive.

Yet, in 1800, the same Duke of Portland is found retracing all his former steps, recanting his Irish creed, demolishing that independence of which he was the guardian, falsifying his own words, and equivocating on those of his sovereign to both parliaments, and arguing upon an incongruity, never yet



paralleled, namely, that the words "final" and "inclusive" were synonymous in politics, for upon no other principle could his grace's first and latter conduct be explained or justified.

It is impossible, therefore, to give the Duke the merit of sincerity towards Ireland in 1782. The altered state of Ireland in 1800 was made the solitary but fallacious pretense for dissolving a solemn bond, breaking the ties of national faith, and diminishing the character of royal integrity.

The Duke was obliged to meet the Irish parliament within two days after his arrival; those days were employed in endeavoring to procure an adjournment of the house, and several confidential communications took place between him, Mr. Grattan and others, who had determined not to admit the delay of a single hour. The Duke's arrival in Ireland had been preceded by letters from the Marquis of Rockingham and Mr. Fox to the Earl of Charlemont, requesting an adjournment of parliament for three weeks, and expressing their conviction that the request would be immediately acceded to. Nothing could more clearly prove their ignorance of the state of Ireland. All the influence of the crown could not have adjourned the commons for a single day. The people were too impatient for any procrastination. By adjournment the parliament would have lost its character, and the members their influence, anarchy would have been the inevitable result, and instead of a placid, constitutional, parliamentary declaration of rights, a recess would probably have occasioned popular declarations of a more alarming tendency. For every reason, therefore, an adjournment, though superficially considered, seemed an object of importance to government, and might have ended in measures greatly to their disadvantage.

The reasons for declining all delay were communicated to the Duke of Portland by Mr. Grattan, and the Duke, though not convinced, having no power of resistance, was passive on a proceeding which he could not encounter.

Mr. Grattan also, previously to proposing his measure to parliament, fairly submitted the intended declaration of rights to the Duke, but it was rather too strong and too peremptory for his grace's approbation. He durst not, however, say he would oppose, and yet could not say he would support it, but he proposed amendments which would have effectually destroyed the vigor and narrowed the compass of these resolutions, and recommended modifications which would have neutralized its firmness. Mr. Grattan declined any alteration

whatever, and the Duke remained doubtful whether his friends would accede to or resist it, and it is more than probable he was himself at the same moment equally irresolute as to his own future conduct; he had no time to communicate with England, and his only resource was that of fishing for the support of eminent persons in both houses of parliament, in the hope of being able in modifying to moderate by their means the detailed measures which would follow the declaration.

Whilst the chief governor was thus involved in perplexity and doubt, every step was taken by the advocates of independence to secure the decisive triumph of Mr. Grattan's intended declaration. Whoever has individually experienced the sensations of ardent expectation, trembling suspense, burning impatience, and determined resolution, and can suppose all those sensations possessing an entire nation, may form some but yet an inadequate idea of the feelings of the Irish people on the 16th of April, 1782, which was the day peremptorily fixed by Mr. Grattan for moving that declaration of rights, which was the proximate cause of Ireland's short-lived prosperity, and the remote one of its final overthrow and annexation. So high were the minds of the public wound up on the eve of that momentous day that the Volunteers flew to their arms without having an enemy to encounter, and, almost breathless with impatience, inquired eagerly after the probability of events which the close of the same day must certainly determine.

It is difficult for any persons but those who have witnessed the awful state of expected revolutions and of popular commotion to describe the interesting moments which preceded the meeting of the Irish parliament; and it is equally impossible to describe the no less interesting conduct of the Irish Volunteers on that trying occasion. Had the parliament rejected Mr. Grattan's motion, no doubt could exist in the minds of those who were witnesses to the temper of the times that the connection with England would have been shaken to its very foundation, yet the most perfect order and decorum were observed by the armed associations, who paraded in every quarter of the city. Though their own ardor and impatience were great they wisely discouraged any manifesting of the same warm feelings amongst the lower orders of the people, and though they were resolved to lose the last drop of their blood to obtain the independence of their country, they acted as

preservers of the peace, and by their exertions effectually prevented the slightest interruption of public tranquillity; the awe of their presence restrained every symptom of popular commotion

Early on the 16th of April, 1782, the great street before the house of parliament was thronged by a multitude of people of every class, and of every description, though many hours must elapse before the house would meet or business be proceeded on. As it was a circumstance which seldom takes place on the eve of remarkable events, it becomes a proper subject of remark, that though more than many thousands of people, inflamed by the most ardent zeal, were assembled in a public street without any guide, restraint or control save the example of the Volunteers, not the slightest appearance of tumult was observable, on the contrary, such perfect order prevailed that not even an angry word or offensive expression escaped their lips. Nothing could more completely prove the good disposition of the Dublin populace, than this correctness of demeanor, at a time when they had been taught that the very existence of their trade and manufactures and consequently the future existence of themselves and their families, was to be decided by the conduct of their representatives that evening; and it was gratifying to see that those who were supposed or even proved to have been their decided enemies, were permitted to pass through this immense assemblage without receiving the slightest token of incivility and with the same ease as those who were known to be their determined friends

The parliament had been summoned to attend this momentous question by an unusual and special call of the house, and by four o'clock a full meeting took place. The body of the House of Commons was crowded with its members, a great proportion of the peerage attended as auditors, and the capacious gallery which surrounded the interior magnificent dome of the house contained above four hundred ladies of the highest distinction, who partook of the same national fire which had enlightened their parents, their husbands and their relatives, and by the sympathetic influence of their presence and zeal communicated an instinctive chivalrous impulse to eloquence and to patriotism.

Those who have only seen the tumultuous rush of imperial parliaments scuffling in the antiquated chapel of St. Stephen's crowded by a gallery of note-takers, anxious to catch the public penny by the earliest reports of good speeches made bad,

and bad speeches made better, indifferent as to subjects and careless as to misrepresentation, yet the principal medium of communication between the sentiments of the representative and the curiosity of the represented, can form the idea of the interesting appearance of the Irish House of Commons. The cheerful magnificence of its splendid architecture, the number, the decorum and the brilliancy of the anxious auditory, the vital question that night to be determined, and the solemn dignity which clothed the proceedings of that awful moment collectively produced impressions, even on disinterested strangers, which perhaps had never been so strongly or so justly excited by the appearance and proceedings of any house of legislature.

Mr. Sextus Perry then occupied the speakers' chair, a person in whose integrity the house, the nation and the government reposed the greatest confidence; a man in whose pure character, spirit, dignity, independence of mind, and honesty of principle, were eminently conspicuous; decisive, constitutional, patriotic, discreet, he was everything that became his office, and everything that became himself. He had been a barrister in extensive practice at the time of his elevation, and to the moment of his death he never departed from the line of rectitude, which marked every step of his progress through life, whether in a public or private station. Mr. Perry took the chair at four o'clock. The singular wording of the summons had its complete effect, and procured the attendance of almost every member resident within the kingdom. A calm but deep solicitude was apparent on almost every countenance when Mr. Grattan entered, accompanied by Mr. Brownlow and several others, the determined and important advocates for the declaration of Irish independence. Mr. Grattan's preceding exertions and anxiety had manifestly injured his health; his tottering frame seemed barely sufficient to sustain his laboring mind, replete with the unprecedented importance and responsibility of the measure he was about to bring forward. He was unacquainted with the reception it would obtain from the connections of the governments, he was that day irretrievably to commit his country with Great Britain and through him Ireland was either to assert her liberty or start from the connection. His own situation was tremendous, that of the members attached to the administration embarrassing, that of the people anxious to palpitation. For a short time a profound silence ensued; it was



expected that Mr. Grattan would immediately rise when the wisdom and discretion of the government gave a turn to the proceedings which in a moment eased the parliament of its solicitude, Mr. Grattan of the weight that oppressed him, and the people of their anxiety. Mr. Hely Hutchinson (then secretary of state in Ireland) rose. He said that his Excellency, the Lieutenant, had ordered him to deliver a message from the King, importing that "His Majesty, being concerned to find that discontents and jealousies were prevailing among his loyal subjects in Ireland, upon matters of great weight and importance, recommended to the house to take the same into their most serious consideration, in order to effect such a final adjustment as might give satisfaction to both kingdoms." And Mr. Hutchinson accompanied this message—and his statement of his own views on the subject—with a determination to support a declaration of Irish rights, and constitutional independence.

Notwithstanding this official communication, the government members were still greatly perplexed how to act. Mr. Grattan's intended declaration of independence was too strong, decisive and prompt to be relished as the measure of any government; it could neither be wholly resisted nor generally approved of by the viceroy. His secretary, Colonel Fitzpatrick, was not yet in parliament, all modification whatsoever had been rejected by Mr. Grattan and his friends, and it is generally believed, that the members of the government went to parliament that day without any decided plan or system, but determined to regulate their own individual conduct by the circumstances that might occur, and the general disposition indicated by the majority of the house in the course of the proceedings.

Thus, on the 16th of April, 1782, after nearly 700 years of subjugation, oppression and misery, after centuries of unavailing complaint and neglected remonstrance, did the King of Ireland, through his Irish secretary of state, at length himself propose to redress those grievances through his Irish parliament, an authority which, as King of England, his minister had never before recognized or admitted. In a moment the whole scene was completely changed; those miserable prospects which had so long disgusted and at length so completely agitated the Irish people, vanished from their view; the phenomena of such a message had an instantaneous and astonishing effect and pointed out such a line of conduct to every party



and to every individual, as left it almost impossible for any but the most mischievous characters to obstruct the happy unanimity which now became the gratifying result of this prudent and wise proceeding.

Mr. Hutchinson, however, observed in his speech that he was not officially authorized to say more than simply to deliver the message; he was therefore silent as to all details, and pledged the government to none, the parliament would act upon the message as to themselves might seem advisable. Another solemn pause now ensued. Mr. Grattan remained silent.

Mr. George Ponsonby rose, and after eulogizing the King, the British Minister, and the Irish Government, simply proposed an humble address in reply, "thanking the King for his goodness and condescension, and assuring his majesty that his faithful commoners would immediately proceed upon the great objects he had recommended to their consideration."

This uncircumstantial reply, however, fell very short of the expectation of the house, or the intentions of Mr. Grattan. On common occasions it would have answered the usual purposes of incipient investigation, but the subject of Irish grievances required no committee to investigate, no protracted debates for further discussion. The claims of Ireland were already well known to the King and to his ministers, they had been recorded by the Dungannon convention, and now only required a parliamentary adoption in terms too explicit to be misconstrued and too peremptory to be rejected. It is true, the good intentions of his majesty were announced, the favorable disposition of his cabinet communicated, a redress of discontent and jealousies suggested, but nothing specific was vouched or even alluded to, the present favorable government might be displaced and the King's conceding intentions changed by a change of ministers, and Ireland thus be again committed with Great Britain under circumstances of diminished strength and more difficult adjustment. Every man perceived the crisis, but no man could foresee the result—some decisive step appeared inevitable, but without great prudence that step might be destructive; popular impetuosity frequently defeats its own objects, the examples of European history in all ages have proved that rash or premature efforts to shake off oppression, generally confirmed, or rent the chains of despotism from the grasp of one ruler, only to transfer them with stronger rivets to the power of a successor. It is less

difficult to throw off the trammels of an usurping government than to secure the preservation of a new-gained constitution, and in cold and phlegmatic nations where the sublime principles of political freedom were less investigated or less valued than in Ireland at that enlightened epoch, more comprehensive powers might be entrusted to the prudence of the people or delegated to the guardianship of selected chieftains; but, in an ardent nation distinguished more for its talents and its enthusiasm than for its steadiness or its foresight, where every man fostered his heated feelings, and the appetite for liberty was whetted even to voracity by the slavery of ages, hasty or violent proceedings, however they might for a moment appear to promote a rescue of the country from existing evils, would probably plunge it still deeper into unforeseen and more deplorable misfortunes. Visionary men and visionary measures are never absent from such political struggles, but if the frenzy of Eutopian speculations gets wing amongst a people, it becomes the most plausible pretext to oppressive rulers and the most destructive enemy to the attainment of constitutional liberty, and at this important crisis had one rash step prematurely committed Ireland and Great Britain in hostile struggle the contest would have ended in the ruin of one country, if not of both.

These considerations had great weight, and excited great embarrassments amongst the leading members in the Irish Parliament; different characters of course took different views of this intricate subject; strength of intellect, courage, cowardice, interest, ignorance or information naturally communicated their correspondent impressions and but few persons seemed entirely to coincide on the specific limits to which these popular proceedings might advance with safety.

## CHAPTER VIII.

DECLARATION OF IRISH RIGHTS IS MOVED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—TRIUMPHANT OUTCOME—IRELAND IS A NATION.

Mr. Grattan had long declared the absolute necessity of gratifying the people by a legislative declaration of Irish rights and constitutional independence, marking out by an indelible record that sacred Rubicon past which the British government should never more advance, and beyond which the Irish nation should never wander. On that point the fate of Ireland vibrated as on a pivot, it must rise or it must fall, it could no longer remain stationary, and the great landed proprietors strongly felt that they must necessarily participate in its vicissitudes; the court had totally lost its influence, the people had entirely acquired theirs, the old system of Irish government was annihilated, and the British cabinet had neither the wisdom nor the disposition to take a decisive lead in more popular arrangements; the parliament and the people were gradually drawing together, an instinctive sense of the common difficulty called all men towards some common centre, all parties, all sects and all factions looked to the talents and the honesty of Mr. Grattan; they knew that he had no object but his own country, and no party but its supporters; they knew that his energetic mind could neither be restrained by resistance nor neutralized by subterfuge; he possessed all those intellectual qualities best calculated to lead the Irish people to the true standard of freedom.

It is an observation not unworthy of remark, that in describing the events of that important evening, the structure of the Irish House of Commons (as before mentioned) at the period of these debates was particularly adapted to convey to the people an impression of dignity and of splendor in their legislative assembly; the interior of the Commons House was a rotunda of great architectural magnificence; an immense gallery, supported by Tuscan pillars, surrounded the inner base of a grand and lofty dome; in that gallery, on every important debate, nearly seven hundred auditors heard the sentiments and learned the characters of their Irish representatives; the gallery was never cleared on a division; the rising generation acquired a love of eloquence and of liberty, the

principles of a just and proud ambition, the details of public business, and the rudiments of constitutional legislation.

The front rows of this gallery were generally occupied by females of the highest rank and fashion, whose presence gave an animating and brilliant splendor to the entire scene, and in a nation such as Ireland then was, from which the gallant principles of chivalry had not been altogether banished, contributed not a little to the preservation of that decorum so indispensable to the dignity and weight of deliberative assemblies.

This entire gallery had been crowded at an early hour by personages of the first respectability of both sexes; it would be difficult to describe the interesting appearance of the whole assemblage at this awful moment, after the speech of Mr. Hutchinson, which in fact decided nothing, a low, confidential whisper ran through the house, and every member seemed to court the sentiments of his neighbor without venturing to express his own, the anxious spectators inquisitively leaned forward, awaiting with palpitating expectation the development of some measure likely to decide the fate of their country, themselves and their posterity. No middle course could possibly be adopted, immediate conciliation and tranquillity, or revolt and revolution was the dilemma which floated on every thinking mind, a solemn pause ensued; at length Mr. Grattan, slowly rising from his seat, commenced the most luminous, brilliant, and effective oration ever delivered in the Irish parliament.

This speech, ranking in the very first class of effective eloquence, rising in its progress, applied equally to the sense, the pride and the spirit of the nation; every succeeding sentence increased the interest which his exordium had excited; tramping upon the arrogant claims and unconstitutional usurpations of the British government, he reasoned on the enlightened principle of a federative compact, and urged irresistibly the necessity, the justice and the policy of immediately and unequivocally declaring the constitutional independence of the Irish nation and the supremacy of the Irish parliament, as the only effectual means of preserving the connection between the two nations. His arguments were powerful and conclusive, but they were not original, it was the very same course of argument which that great Irish statesman, Molyneux, had published near a century before, the same principles on which Swift, the ablest of the Irish patriots, had de-



fended his country and the same which that less able, but not less sincere and honest friend of Ireland, Dr. Lucas, had continually maintained, frequently in opposition to the doctrines of Mr. Grattan's own father. Some passages of this oration were particularly characteristic of Mr. Grattan's energetic manner. "He admired that steady progressive virtue which had at length awakened Ireland to her rights, and roused her to her liberties; he was not yet old, but he remembered her a child, he had watched her growth; from childhood she grew to arms, from arms she grew to liberty; whenever historic annals tell of great revolutions in favor of freedom they were owing to the quick feelings of an irritated populace excited by some strong object presented to their senses, such was the daughter of Virginius sacrificed to virtue, such were the meagre and haggard looks of the seven bishops sacrificed to liberty. But it was not the sudden impulse of irritated feelings which had animated Ireland, she had calmly mused for centuries on her oppressions, and as deliberately rose to rescue the land from her oppressors.

For a people to acquire liberty they must have a lofty conception of themselves; what sets one nation above another but the soul that dwells within her? Deprive it of its soul, it may still retain a strong arm, but from that moment ceases to be a nation, of what avail the exertions of Lords and Commons if unsupported by the soul and exertions of the people? The Dungannon meeting had spoken this language with the calm and steady voice of an injured country; that meeting had been considered as an alarming measure because it was unprecedented. But it was an original transaction and all original transactions must be unprecedented; the attainment of Magna Charta had no precedent, it was a great original transaction not obtained by votes of parliament, but by barons in the field. To that great original transaction England owed her liberty, and to the great original transaction at Dungannon Ireland will be indebted for hers. The Irish Volunteers had associated to support the laws and the constitution, the usurpations of England have violated both, and Ireland has therefore armed to defend the principles of the British constitution against the violations of the British government. Let other nations basely suppose that people were made for governments, Ireland has declared that governments were made for the people, and even crowns, those great luminaries whose brightness they all reflect, can receive their cheering fire only



from the pure flame of a free constitution. England has the plea of necessity for acknowledging the independence of America, for admitting Irish independence she has the plea of justice! America has shed much English blood, and America is to be set free; Ireland has shed her own blood for England, and is Ireland to remain in fetters? Is Ireland to be the only nation whose liberty England will not acknowledge, and whose affections she cannot subdue? We have received the civic crown from our people, and shall we, like slaves, lay it down at the feet of British supremacy?"

Proceeding in the same glow of language and of reasoning, and amidst an universal cry of approbation, Mr. Grattan went fully into a detail of Irish rights and grievances, and concluded his statement by moving, as an amendment to Mr. Ponsonby's motion, "That an humble address be presented to his majesty to return his majesty the thanks of this house for his most gracious message to this house, delivered by his Grace, the Lord Lieutenant

"To assure his Majesty of our unshaken attachment to his Majesty's person and government, and of our lively sense of his paternal care in thus taking the lead to administer content to his Majesty's subjects to Ireland

"That thus encouraged by his royal interposition, we shall beg leave, with all duty and submission, to lay before his Majesty the cause of all our discontents and jealousies; to assure his Majesty that his subjects of Ireland are a free people, that the crown of Ireland is an *imperial crown*, inseparably connected with the crown of Great Britain on which connection the interests and happiness of both nations essentially depend—but that the kingdom of Ireland is a distinct *kingdom*, with a parliament of her *own* the sole legislature thereof—that there is no body of men competent to make laws to bind the nation but the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland—nor any parliament which hath any authority or power of any sort whatever in this country save only the parliament of Ireland—to assure his Majesty that we humbly conceive that in this right the very essence of our liberty exists—a right which we, on the part of the people of Ireland, do claim as their birth-right, and which we cannot yield but with our lives."

The effect of this speech and the concluding amendment was instantaneous and decisive. A legislative declaration of independence at once placed the rights and determinations of Ireland on a footing too high to be relinquished without an

exterminating contest; the circumstances of both nations were imperative; Ireland was committed and must persist, and Great Britain had lavished in America her powers of resistance. That haughty government, which in all the arrogance of superior force had for so many centuries lorded over the natural rights and scoffed at the groans of her sister country, at length reached the highest climax of oppression and intolerance, and was necessitated to acknowledge the wrongs and the virtues of that people, and peaceably capitulate to a nation which, by honest means, it might at any time have conciliated. The whole house in a moment caught the patriotic flame, which seemed to issue from every bench of the entire assembly. Mr. Grattan had selected, to second and support his declaration, a person who gave it as much influence as character and independence could possibly communicate. Well aware of the great importance which was attributed to the accession of the landed interest in parliamentary measures, he judiciously selected Mr. Brownlow, member for the county of Armagh, as one of the first of the country gentlemen in point of wealth and reputation.

No man could better be adapted to obtain the concurrence of the landed interest than Mr. Brownlow. His own stake in the country was too great to be risked on giddy speculations; his interests were entirely identified with those of the country; and having no courtly connections to detract from his independence, or aristocratic trains to trifle with his purity, everything he said, and every measure he supported, carried a certain portion of influence amongst the country gentlemen, and they often followed his example solely because they could not suspect its honesty.

The great body of the landed proprietors in parliament, though intrinsically honest, were simple, prejudiced, refractory, and gregarious; the Government, on ordinary occasions, found it not difficult to delude or disunite them; and even on this day, without such a leader as Mr. Brownlow, the entire unanimity of their opinion on their conduct could by no means be depended on.

After Mr. Grattan had concluded, Mr. Brownlow instantly rose—a great symptom of approbation ran through the house at perceiving so great an auxiliary to so decisive a declaration—his example gave countenance to many, and confidence to all; his speech was short, but it was decided, and expressed in such terms as at once determined the country gentlemen to adopt

the measure in its full extent without further delay, and to pledge their lives and fortunes to the support and establishment of Irish independence; he said, "as he had the honor to second the mover in adversity, he could not avoid maintaining the same honor at a moment of triumph. He had long seen that things must come to this, the people had learned their rights and they *would* have them. An end has been proclaimed to temporizing expedients, to artful delay, and to political junctions; the people have demanded their rights, and the Irish parliament will support them with their lives and fortunes. He would leave the other side of the House to discuss the subject, and if they were anxious to atone for their past conduct, he would not check the ardor of their patriotism, which, after being so long restrained, seemed ready to burst forth, and he should rejoice in the explosion. As to the declaration of rights, the honorable gentleman would have the eternal gratification of having reared this infant child, his (Mr. Brownlow's) only merit would be, that, though he could not maintain it with ability, his utmost zeal should be exerted to support it."

On the conclusion of Mr Brownlow's speech, another short pause ensued; but it was not a pause of doubt, the measure was obviously decided, the victory was complete; nothing remained in suspense but through whom, and by what species of declaration the Government could submit to so strong a measure; some of the officers of the Crown had been the servants of the last administration, and the short period from the arrival of the Duke of Portland had given no time to his cabinet for consideration or concert; the dynasty of diplomatic evasion had ceased to reign; and for the first time in the annals of the British history, the officers and ministers of government appeared to be let loose upon the parliament, to recant their principles and capitulate for their characters. The first they performed, the latter they failed in. Men may pity the feelings of a vanquished enemy, but they can never securely trust to his compulsory repentance, and they who had expended every day of their political life in upholding the principle of British supremacy, could hardly expect to receive more confidence from the nation than that which belongs to the character of defeated apostates.

Mr George Ponsonby, on the part of the Lord Lieutenant, submitted with as good a grace as the circumstance would admit of, to a proceeding which it was impossible could be

pleasing to any English ministry. Mr. Ponsonby had been generally in opposition since the time of his father's disagreement with Lord Townsend, and his family being entirely attached to the Whig interests of England, the change of ministry naturally brought to the Marquis of Rockingham's administration and aid, the persons who had been so long in opposition to his predecessor. Mr. Ponsonby's family, of course, connected itself in Ireland with the Duke of Portland, and it was expected that he would have been placed in high confidence under his Grace's administration.

Blending an aristocratic mind with patriotic feelings, and connected with a Viceroy who could himself hardly guess the road he might have to travel, Mr. Ponsonby could not at such a moment be expected to play the full game of popular expectation. Extensive and high family connections, whatever party they espouse in public transactions, ever communicate some tints of their own coloring, and impose some portion of voluntary restraint upon the free agency of public characters; and had Mr. Ponsonby been an isolated man, he would have been a more distinguished personage. A nation may sometimes look with confidence to individuals, but they are a credulous people who look with confidence to party. Individuals may be honest, but gregarious integrity would be a phenomenon in politics. It is the collisions of party, not their visionary virtue, that is advantageous to a people who frequently acquire their rights not through the political purity, but through the rancorous recrimination of ambitious factions.

On this occasion, however, Mr. Ponsonby's steady, judicious, and plausible address exactly corresponded with the exigencies of the Viceroy, and gave a tinge of generous concession to his Grace's accedence, which the volatile gratitude of the Irish nation for a moment mistook for genuine sincerity. Mr. Ponsonby sought to be considered at the same moment as faithful to his country and faithful to its government, a union which the bad policy of England had taught the Irish people to consider as incompatible. His manner and his speech, however, had the effect intended. His fair and discreet reputation gave great weight to so gratifying a declaration; and no impression could be more favorable to the Duke of Portland than that which he derived from the short, conciliating observations of Mr. Ponsonby. He stated, "that he most willingly consented to the proposed amendment, and would answer that the noble Lord who presided in the government of Ireland,



wished to do everything in his power for the satisfaction of the nation, and he knew that the noble Duke would not lose one moment in forwarding this remonstrance of parliament to the Throne, and he would use his utmost influence in obtaining the rights of Ireland, an object on which he had fixed his heart."

This declaration was received with the loudest cheers by a great majority of the House; but there existed men whose wise scepticism still retained their doubts of his Excellency's unsophisticated sincerity. They reflected justly, that the irresistible position of Ireland alone had at length induced the British government to this magnanimous declaration. Past events had indisputably decided, that whether cabinets of Whigs or cabinets of Tories had ruled the British councils, the system of its government had remained invariably adverse to the rights of Ireland; high British supremacy had been the principles and the practice of all its administrations and of all its princes; and amidst all the changes and revolutions of England, Ireland had never yet experienced one friendly ministry.

On this subject Mr Flood (one of the ablest men that Ireland ever produced) was this night silent. He saw further, and thought deeper than any of his contemporaries; he knew the world and of course was sceptical. As a popular orator, he was inferior to Mr. Grattan, but as a deliberate senator he was vastly his superior. He knew that all precedent of British cabinets gave just reason to attribute this sudden transition of English policy, not to the feelings of her liberality, but to the extent of her embarrassments; and that the Duke of Portland's having "set his heart" upon obtaining the rights of Ireland, was only giving the gloss of voluntary merit to a concession which was in fact a matter of absolute necessity, and without which his Grace foresaw that all British authority in Ireland would be extinguished forever. Mr. Flood's confidence, therefore, never was implicit. Mr. Grattan, on the contrary, was deceived by his own zeal, and duped by his own honesty; and his friend, Lord Charlemont, was too courtly a nobleman to suspect his Grace of such consummate insincerity. But Mr. Flood even at that moment did not stand alone in this ungracious incredulity; and ensuing events have fully confirmed the wisdom of his scepticism.

This speech of Mr. Ponsonby's is the more remarkable, because it was reserved for the same Mr. Ponsonby, seventeen years afterwards, to expose, in the clearest and most able lan-



guage, this very duplicity of the same Duke of Portland; and the open avowal of his Grace in 1799, that he had "never" considered that this concession of England, in 1782, should be a final adjustment between the two nations, leaves no room for doubt as to his Grace's mental reservation, and the existence of a diplomatic sophistry which the Irish parliament, gulled by their own credulity, and enveloped in a cloud of gratitude and exultation, were at that moment prevented from suspecting.

Mr. Hussey Bugh, and some other members, shortly but zealously supported this declaration of Irish independence; all was unanimity; not a symptom of opposition was manifested, but on the close of the proceeding, a circumstance not less remarkable than disgusting occurred.

Mr. John Fitzgibbon, whose indigenuous hostility to the liberties of his country had never omitted any opportunity of opposing its emancipation, on a sudden became metamorphosed, assumed a strange and novel character, and professed himself not only the warmest advocate of Irish freedom, but a deadly and inveterate foe to that very system of British usurpation, to the practice of which, till that moment, he had himself been an undeviating and virulent supporter.

Mr. Fitzgibbon's embarrassment in making this declaration was too strong and too new in him to remain unnoticed. The unanimity of the House had left him no room for cavil. His former conduct had left him no room for consistence. His haughty disposition despised neutrality, and his overbearing mind revolted from submission; his stubborn heart, though humiliated, was unsubdued. But he saw that he was unsupported by his friends, and felt that he was powerless against his enemies. To such a mind the conflict was most dreadful; a sovereign contempt for public opinion was his only solace, and never did he more fully require the aid of that consolation.

This most remarkable, false, and inconsistent of all political recantations ever pronounced by a confirmed courtier, was delivered in the tone of a confirmed patriot. "No man," said Mr. Fitzgibbon, with an affected emphasis, "can say that the Duke of Portland has power to grant us that redress which the nation unanimously demands, but as Ireland is committed, no man, I trust, will shirk from her support, but go through, hand and heart, in the establishment of our liberties. As I was cautious in committing, so I am now firm in asserting

the rights of my country. My declaration, therefore, is, that as the nation has determined to obtain the restoration of her liberty, it behooves every man in Ireland to *stand firm*." Yet this was the Fitzgibbon who in a few years trampled on her liberties, and sold her constitution.

The effect produced by this extraordinary speech from a man, the whole tenor of whose public life had been in hostility to its principles, neither added weight to the measure nor gained character for the speaker, disgust was the most prevalent sensation, but had he been a less able man, contempt would have been more prominent. All further debate ceased; the speaker put the question on Mr. Grattan's amendment, a unanimous "AYE" burst forth from every quarter of the house, he repeated the question, the applause was redoubled, a moment of tumultuous exultation followed, and, after centuries of oppression, Ireland at length declared herself an INDEPENDENT NATION.

This important event quickly reached the impatient crowds of every rank of society, who, without doors, awaited the decision of their parliament; a cry of joy and exultation spread with electric rapidity through the entire city; its echo penetrated to the very interior of the house, everything gave way to an effusion of happiness and congratulation that had never before been exhibited in that misgoverned country.

Ireland from that moment assumed a new aspect; she rose majestically from her ruins, and surveyed the author of her resurrection with admiration and with gratitude. A young barrister, without professional celebrity, without family connections, possessed of no considerable fortune, nor of any personal influence, save that which talent and virtue involuntarily acquire, leagued with no faction, supported individually by no political party, became the instrument of Providence to liberate his country, and in a single day achieved what the most able statesmen, the most elevated personages, the most powerful and best connected parties never could effect. Aided by the circumstances of the moment, he seized the opportunity with promptitude, vigor and perseverance, but whilst he raised his country to prosperity, and himself to unexpected fortune and never-fading honor, he acquired vindictive enemies by the brilliancy of his success, and afterwards fell a temporary sacrifice to the perseverance of their malice and the dissimulations of their jealousy.

Mr. Connolly and Sir Henry Cavendish, also, on this night,

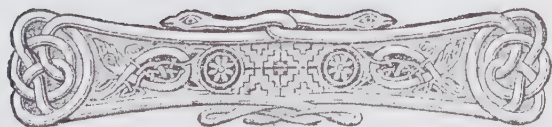
as ardently supported the independence of Ireland, as if it was a principle grafted in their nature. Both of them had put their signatures to a "life and fortune" declaration, to uphold the perpetual independence of their country, but it will appear in the progress of Irish affairs, how little reliance is to be placed on political declarations, where an alteration of circumstances or connections so frequently operates as a remuneration of principle. On the discussion of the Union in the year 1800, Sir Henry had exchanged the Duke of Devonshire for an employment in the treasury, and a new planet had arisen to influence Mr. Connolly; in that year both those gentlemen declaimed as conscientiously against the independence of the Irish nation, as if they had never pledged their "lives and fortunes" for their perpetual support of it.

It was impossible for any uninterested observer of the character and composition of the Irish Parliament to have conceived that the apparent unanimity of this night could have arisen from any one principle of universal action. Men were actuated by various motives, forming a mixed composition of patriotism and of policy; it was the unanimous firmness of the people, and not the abstract virtue of their delegates, which achieved this revolution, nor is it possible to read some of the popular resolutions of that day without feeling admiration at the happy union of spirit, of patriotism, and of prudence, which characterized their proceedings.

When the intelligence of these events was circulated through the nation, the joy and rejoicings of the people were beyond all description; every city, town, and village in Ireland blazed with the emblems of exultation, and resounded with the shouts of triumph. The Volunteers, however, were not dazzled by the sunshine of the moment, they became more active than more remiss. Much, indeed, was faithfully promised, but still everything remained to be actually performed, and it soon appeared, that human life is not more uncertain in its duration than political faith precarious in its sincerity. The fair intentions of one government are generally called at least injudicious by its successors; political honesty has often vegetated in British Councils, but never yet did it survive to the period of maturity, and the short existence of the Duke of Portland's splendid administration warranted the cautious suspicions of the Volunteers, and afforded the succeeding ministry an opportunity for attempting those insidious measures

which soon afterwards characterized anew the dispositions of the British Cabinet.

The parliament and the people, when the paroxysm of their joy had subsided, waited with some solicitude for the King's reply to the declaration of their independence, and a general suspension of public business took place until its arrival. It was, however, the first pause of confidence and tranquillity that Ireland had experienced since her connection with Great Britain; little could she then foresee that her new prosperity was but the precursor of future evils and of scenes as cruel and as destructive as any she had ever before experienced. The seeds of the Irish union were sown by the very same event which had procured her independence, so early as 1784. That independence was assailed by a despotic minister under color of a commercial tariff. In 1789 events connected with the malady of the Monarch and the firm adherence of the Irish Parliaments to the constitutional rights of the Heir Apparent determined the same minister in the fatal project of extinguishing the Irish legislature, and in 1798, a rebellion artificially permitted to terrify the country, and followed by acts and scenes of unparalleled corruption, for a moment warped away the minds of men from the exercise of common reason, and gave power and pretence to the British Cabinet to effect that extinguishment at a moment of national derangement.



## CHAPTER IX.

ENGLAND ANGERED AT IRELAND'S SUCCESS—DUKE OF PORTLAND'S  
DUPLICITY—THE VOLUNTEERS PREPARE FOR ACTION.

The foundation of Irish independence had now been laid by the spirit of the Parliament and the unanimity of the people, and the stately structure of Irish liberty seemed likely to rise with solidity and magnificence. The laborers were numerous and indefatigable, and nothing was to be dreaded but contrariety in the plans, or jealousy among the architects— dangers which are proved by the sequel of her history, to be the true and substantial cause of Ireland's annexation. It is demonstrated by facts, beyond the power of refutation, that from the moment the British ministry found it imperatively necessary to submit to this declaration of Irish independence, no consideration was paramount in their councils to the desire of counteracting it. In furtherance of that object, from the period of the Duke of Portland's administration to that of Lord Cornwallis, the old system of dividing the Irish against each other, and profiting by their dissensions, was artfully pursued by the English Ministry, to re-establish their own supremacy, and from that moment they resolved to achieve, at any risk or price, that disastrous measure, which, at one blow, has prostrated the pride, the power, and the legislature of Ireland, and reduced her from the rank of a nation to the level of a department. But the people had now no leisure for suspicious forethought or mature reflection, and the interval between the declaration of independence and the reply of his Majesty to that declaration, though a period of deep anxiety, neither awakened serious doubts, nor produced implicit confidence.

An adjournment for three weeks was now proposed in the Commons, to give time for the arrival of His Majesty's answer to their Address and Declaration. This motion, though it gave rise to a conversation rather than a debate, produced one of the most singular political phenomena that had ever appeared in the history of any nation.

Mr. John Scott, then Attorney General, afterwards Lord Clonmel, whose despotic conduct had previously given rise to so many and severe animadversions, took advantage on this



occasion to recant his former and favorite political principle, that "might constitutes right." He now declared his firm and unqualified adherence to the claims of Ireland, in terms which, a week before, he would have prosecuted as a seditious libel, and tendered his large fortune toward a general fund, to enforce from Great Britain the rights of his country, if force should become necessary.

He said that he now felt it indispensable for him to throw off all equivocal and mysterious silence, and declared as his unchangeable opinion, that Great Britain never had any right whatever to bind his country, and that any acts she had ever done for that purpose were decided usurpations. That if the tenure of his office of Attorney General depended upon the maintenance of doctrines injurious to the rights and independence of Ireland, it was an infamous tenure; and if the Parliament of Great Britain were determined to lord it over Ireland, he was resolved not to be their villain in executing their tyranny. That if matters should proceed to the extremity to which he feared they were verging, he should not be an insignificant subscriber to the fund for defending their common rights. That a life of much labor, together with the blessing of Providence, and what is commonly called good luck, had given him a landed property of £5,000 per year, and an office of great emolument, all of which should certainly be devoted to the service of his country. That it would be disgraceful, for the paltry emoluments of an office, to stand watching the vibrations of the balance, when he had determined to throw his life and fortune into the scale. "I know," concluded the Attorney General, "that the public mind is on fire; I know that the determination of the people is to be free, and I adopt their determination."

A speech of so strong and stormy a nature, never having before been uttered by any Minister or Law Officer of the British Empire, nor even by any member of the Irish Parliament, created a sensation which it is scarcely possible to describe. One sentence conveyed a volume of information.

"If matters proceed to the extremities to which I fear they are verging," was a direct declaration of mistrust in the Government he served; and such a speech, made in Parliament by the first confidential executive Law Officer of the Crown, possessed a character of mystery and great importance.

The dread of an insurrection in Ireland was thus, in direct terms, announced by the King's Attorney General, and by his

intrepid determination to risk his life and fortune to support its objects, he afforded good reason to apprehend that his Majesty's reply was not likely to be such as would cultivate tranquillity, and left no doubt that the Attorney General foreboded an unwise reluctance in the British Cabinet, to a measure so vital to the peace, perhaps to the integrity, of the British Empire. This conduct of Mr. Scott, coupled with the previous secession of Mr. Fitzgibbon, must be looked on as among the most extraordinary occurrences of these, or any other, times in Ireland.

In the history of nations and of parliaments, there is not another instance of two such men, publicly professing and practicing the principles of arbitrary power, being so humbled, and reduced to the abject condescension of feigning a public virtue they had theretofore but ridiculed, and assuming a fictitious patriotism, the result, at best, of their fears or of their policy.

However, be the motive what it might, that most unprecedented conduct taught the British Government that they could no longer trifle with Ireland. Their power was then extinct, and no course remained but that of instantly relinquishing their long vaunted supremacy, and surrendering at discretion to the just demands of a determined and potent people, and the splendid, though temporary triumph achieved by Ireland, affords a glorious precedent for oppressed nations, and an instructive lesson for arrogant usurpation.

Immediately on this unexpected turn, the Duke of Portland sent off two despatches to England; one to the Cabinet as a public document, and the other, a private and confidential note to Mr. Fox. The latter document explained his reasons for the necessity he felt of acceding, without any appearance of reluctance, to any demands which might at that moment be made by the Irish Parliament; but intimated "that so strong a difference of opinion appeared to exist between some gentlemen of weight that arrangements more favorable to England might possibly be effected through their controversies, although he could not venture to propose such, were they perfectly unanimous. He stated, in conclusion, that he would omit no opportunity of cultivating his connection with the Earl of Charlemont, who appeared entirely disposed to place confidence in his administration, and to give a proper tone to the armed bodies over which he had the most considerable influence."

So skillfully did he act upon these suggestions, that he inveigled the good but feeble Earl Charlemont entirely into his trammels, and as long as his Grace remained in the Irish Government, he not only much influenced that nobleman, but kept him at arms length from some of the ablest statesmen of the country, without their perceiving the insidious power that caused the separation.

The other Ministers adopted the same principles, and they did not despair, by plausible conduct, according to the Duke of Portland's policy, to temporize with all parties, of playing off the people and the Parliament unperceptibly against each other; and, by gradually diminishing their mutual confidence, bringing both to a dependence upon the good faith of the British Ministry, and so indisposing the Irish Parliament from insisting upon any measures which might humble the pride, or alarm the interests of the British nation.

The British Cabinet had certainly great embarrassments to encounter. They had the difficult step to take of gratifying the claims of Ireland without affecting the egotism of Great Britain. But the relative interests of the two countries being in many points fundamentally repugnant, the dilemma of Ministers was extremely embarrassing. It was doubly increased by a declaration of rights, and a positive demand, which anticipated the credit of a spontaneous generosity; an advantage which was now lost to them forever. Their voluntary favors would now be changed to compulsory grants, the extent of which they could neither foresee nor control.

While the British Cabinet and the Irish Viceroy actively corresponded, the Irish nation was not idle. No relaxation was permitted in the warlike preparations of the Volunteer army. Reviews and discipline were continued with unintermitting ardor and emulation. Their artillery was daily exercised in the Phoenix Park, near Dublin. Camp equipage was preparing for actual service, and on the day to which the parliament adjourned, the whole of the Volunteer force of the metropolis was under arms, and fully prepared for the alternative (which the decision of his Majesty's Cabinet, through the speech of its Viceroy, might impose upon the people) either to return to their homes for the peaceful enjoyment of their rights or instantly take the field. Musters had been ordered, to ascertain the probable numbers of Volunteers ready for immediate active service. The returns had increased from the former census to about 124,000 officers and

soldiers, of whom upwards of 100,000 effectives, well armed and disciplined, and owning no superior but God and their country, would, on the first sound of an hostile trumpet, have rushed with enthusiasm to the standards of independence. The Volunteer regiments and corps were commanded by gentlemen of rank and consideration in the country, and disciplined by retired officers of the British army; the sergeants being chiefly veteran soldiers who had fought in the American campaigns, and learned from their own defeats the powers of a people determined to obtain their freedom. The whole disposable military force of Great Britain was at that period inadequate to combat one week with the Volunteers of Ireland, composing an army which could be increased, at a call, by a million of enthusiasts; and which, in case a contest had arisen, would have also been liberally recruited by the desertion of the Irish soldiers from the British army—nearly one-third of that army was composed of Irishmen. The British navy, too, was then also manned by what were generally denominated British tars, but a large proportion of whom were in fact sailors of Irish birth and Irish feelings, ready to shed their blood in the service of Great Britain whilst she remained the friend of Ireland, but as ready to seize and to steer the British navy into Irish ports, if she declared against their country—and thus it will ever be.

The safety of England was then clearly in the hands of Ireland, and one hostile step, at that perilous crisis of the two nations, must have terminated their unity, and of course the power of the British empire. But the Cabinet at length considered that resistance to the just demands of Ireland would be unavailing, and that she was then too powerful for England to hazard an insurrection, which, if once excited, it would have been impossible to suppress.

Too cautious to risk a danger so imminent, they yielded to existing circumstances, and determined to concede; a system of conduct, which is called perfidy in private life and policy by Governments, which has been very generally and very successfully resorted to in important political dilemmas, and they adopted the low and cunning course of yielding with affected candor, and counteracting with deep duplicity.

The Cabinet reflected, also, that times and circumstances cannot always remain unchanged, and that the political vicissitudes to which every State is subject frequently enable conceding powers to re-assume usurpation; and, when restored



to strength and vigor, again to forget the law of nations and of justice, and explain away or deny the spirit of those engagements which their feebleness had contracted. The events which have since occurred in Ireland, and the conduct and equivocation of the British Ministers in 1799 and 1800, proved to the world that such were the premeditated and ulterior views of the British Cabinet, in 1782; and that the Duke of Portland was well aware of its objects, and freely lent himself to their preparation.

Mr. Fox never had any especial predilection for Ireland. He was ignorant equally of her rights and her localities, and he considered her only as the segment of a great circle, which he labored to encompass. He wielded the grievances of Ireland only as a weapon of offence against the ministry. He was a great man, with a popular ambition, and assumed the hereditary title of Whig, when its purest principles had nearly become obsolete. Mr. Pitt had in view the very same object, to *rule*, and they only differed in the means of affecting it. The one wished to rise upon the shoulders of the people; the other, to be elevated upon those of the aristocracy. But the ambition of both was to govern the Empire. Their rivalry was of party, and their struggle was for power, but the internal prosperity of Ireland, as a distinct abstract consideration, gave not one hour's solicitude to either one or the other of those celebrated Ministers, though its resources were in part an object to both.

The Duke of Portland was not of sufficient talent or weight to lead the Ministry, but he had enough of both to be an efficient accessory. A man of plain, fair, undistinguished reputation can effect important acts of duplicity, with less suspicion and more facility than more prominent and energetic personages, and when the moment of development arrives, he can plead the honesty of his character, and the error of his judgment; or, at the worst, he may gain a great point, and can only lose a narrow reputation.

These observations may be interesting, as decidedly applicable to the administration of the Duke of Portland. His Grace's conduct and speeches on the question of the Union, in 1800, leave no doubt that the whole tenor of his conduct, in 1782, must have been a premeditated tissue of dissimulation.

The Irish House met, pursuant to the adjournment, on the 27th of May, 1782, a day teeming with importance to the fate of Ireland and the character of Great Britain. It is not



easy to imagine the solicitude and impatience with which the people awaited the decision of Great Britain on its claims.

On the morning of that memorable day, the Volunteers were under arms at an early hour. Their artillery, under the order of James Napper Tandy, was stationed on the quays, and commanded all the bridges leading from the Military Barracks to the House of Parliament. The other corps, horse and foot, were posted at different stations of communication in the city, while some regular troops, formed in treble files, lined the streets for the passage of the Lord Lieutenant. But though neither party knew what would be the result of that day's proceedings, nor whether war or peace would be proclaimed by the British Ministry, not a symptom of hostile feeling appeared on any side. The Volunteers and the regular troops saluted each other as they passed, and reciprocally showed every mark of military courtesy. The strictest order prevailed, and the whole, by a combination most interesting and extraordinary, formed a scene to which history affords no parallel.

The Duke of Portland had not a very dignified demeanor, but unfortunately, everybody then considered him as a man of political integrity. His time, during the recess, had been skillfully employed, to gain upon the country gentlemen by flattering attention and courtly blandishment.

His Grace had learned, from Earl Charlemont, the character of Mr. Grattan, before he saw him. He was fully apprised of his spirit and patriotism, and knew that neither could be conquered; but he conceived that by operating on the moderation and generous confidence of that virtuous Irishman, he might eventually divide the Parliament, chill the general enthusiasm of the people, and effect the objects of the British Government, and, before the meeting of Parliament, his Grace had made great progress in exciting shades of difference in the opinions of those who should have been unanimous. A premature gratitude and credulous confidence had already prepared the House for his reception, and he delivered the speech from the throne, with a well affected honesty of emphasis, and an imposing appearance of individual gratification.

The Viceroy's speech gave rise to a debate of the very highest importance, not only as affecting the interests and feelings of that day, but as influencing the subsequent events and destiny of the Irish nation.

“My Lords and Gentlemen: It gives me the utmost satisfaction, that the first time I have occasion to address you, I find myself enabled, by the magnanimity of the King and the wisdom of the Parliament of Great Britain, to assure you that immediate attention has been paid to your representations, and that the British Legislature have concurred in resolution to remove the causes of your discontents and jealousies, are united in a desire to gratify every wish expressed in your late Addresses to the Throne.

“If anything could add to the pleasure I feel in giving you those assurances, it is that I can accompany them with my congratulations on the important and decisive victory gained by the fleets of his Majesty over those of the common enemy in the *West Indies*, and by the signal advantage obtained by his Majesty's arms in the *Island of Ceylon and on the coast of Coromandel*.

“By the papers which, in obedience to his Majesty's commands, I have directed to be laid before you, you will receive the most convincing testimonials of the cordial reception which your representatives have met with from the Legislature of Great Britain; but his Majesty, whose first and most anxious wish is to exercise His Royal Prerogative in such a manner as may be most conducive to the welfare of his faithful subjects, has further given it me in command to assure you of His gracious disposition to give His Royal Assent to Acts to *prevent* the suppression of Bills in the Privy Council of this Kingdom, and the alternation of them anywhere, and to limit the duration of the Act for the better Regulation and Accommodation of His Majesty's Forces in this Kingdom, to the term of two years.

“These benevolent intentions of His Majesty, and the willingness of his Parliament of Great Britain to second his gracious purposes, are unaccompanied by any stipulation or condition whatever.

“The *good faith*, the generosity, and the honor of *this nation* affords them the surest pledge of a corresponding disposition, on your part, to promote and perpetuate the harmony, the stability, and the glory of the Empire.

“On my own part, I entertain not the least doubt but that the same spirit which urged you to share the freedom of Great Britain, will confirm you in your determination to share her fate also, standing and falling with the British Empire.”

Mr. Grattan immediately rose. His unsuspecting and

grateful mind, though congenial to the honest liberality of a patriot, was quite too conceding and inexperienced to meet the ways and wiles of deceptive statesmen. Misled by the apparent sincerity of that speech, and the plain and plausible demeanor of the Duke of Portland, he lost sight of everything but confidence and gratitude, and left to deeper politicians to discover the snare that lay concealed amidst the soothing and honorable language of the Viceroy.

He said: "That as Great Britain had given up every claim to authority over Ireland, he had not the least idea that she should be also bound to make any declaration that she had formerly usurped that power. This would be a foolish caution, a dishonorable condition. The nation that insists upon the humiliation of another is a foolish nation, and Ireland is not a foolish nation. I move you, to assure his Majesty of our unfeigned affection to His Royal Person and Government, that we feel, most sensibly, the attention our representations have received from the magnanimity of His Majesty, and the wisdom of the Parliament of Great Britain; to assure His Majesty, that we conceive the resolution for an unqualified, unconditional repeal of the 6th George the First to be a measure of consummate wisdom and justice, suitable to the dignity and eminence of both Nations, exalting the character of both, and furnishing a perpetual pledge of mutual amity, to assure His Majesty that we are sensibly affected by his virtuous determination to accede to the wishes of His faithful subjects, and to exercise His Royal prerogative in the manner most conducive to their welfare. That, gratified in those particulars, we do assure His Majesty that no constitutional question between the *two nations will any longer exist* to interrupt their harmony, and that Great Britain, as she approved of our firmness, may rely on our affection, and that we remember, and do repeat our determination, to stand or fall with the British nation."

When Mr. Grattan concluded the Address, which was seconded by Mr. Brownlow, a most animated and interesting, though desultory debate, immediately ensued—a debate too much connected with the subsequent transactions on the Union not to be particularly noticed in this stage of the history.

The Recorder of, and member for, Dublin, Sir Samuel Bradstreet, a strong-minded, public-spirited man, an able lawyer and independent Member of Parliament—of a rough, decisive, firm deportment—was the first who ventured to insin-

uate his dissent from the Address, and his suspicions of the Duke's sincerity. He entirely objected to that sweeping clause of Mr. Grattan's Address—"That all constitutional questions between the two countries were at an end." He stated that many were not yet touched upon, many that were vital to Irish independence still remained unnoticed; for he insisted that the Irish Parliament actually sat at that moment under an English Statute, and that the Address, as moved, was in some instance premature—in others too comprehensive—in all, defective. Subsequent events have since proved the soundness and the acuteness of his judgment and foresight.

Mr. Flood said but a few words, and they were rather insinuating than insisting on his dissent. He started some difficulty on the subject of external legislation, he expressed his opinion, that matters were not yet sufficiently advanced to form a decided judgment upon the extent and modifications of the proposed arrangements; but it was obvious that this great man was neither confident nor satisfied, and that he conceived, that though the chief demand had been made, and that grant acceded to, yet that it would require profound consideration, and a steady, comprehensive system, to secure the tenure. He publicly anticipated nothing, but his own want of faith in the British Cabinet was obvious and comprehensive.

Mr. David Walshe, an able, pertinacious lawyer, courageous and not conciliating, was a still more determined sceptic. He had a clear head, a suspicious, perverse mind, and a temper that never would outstretch itself to meet pacific objects. He debated well, but was too intemperate to acquire or maintain a general popularity. A part of his speech on this memorable night is also of great importance. He followed Sir Samuel Bradstreet on the point of external legislation, and concluded with these remarkable expressions:

"I repeat it, that until England declares unequivocally, by an act of her own legislature, that she had no right, in any instance, to make laws to bind Ireland, the usurped power of English legislation never can be considered by us as relinquished. We want not the concessions of England to restore us our liberties. If we are true to ourselves, we possess the fortitude, we possess the will, and, thank God, we possess the power, to assert our rights as men, and accomplish our independence as a nation."

The gauntlet was now thrown, the vital question was



started—England was put on her defence, and Ireland on her trial.

The great point of confirming Irish independence and the constitution being once started, never could be relinquished; it must be decided—the suspicion of English sincerity once raised, must be satisfied; and it appeared in a moment, that Mr. Grattan's address could never be considered either secure or conclusive. But even those who thought so, did not conceive that the moment had as yet arrived when that subject should be so warmly discussed.

Those who feared that a difference at so early a period might defeat all their expectation, chose rather to accede to an address they did not approve of, than hazard a dis-union which might never be remedied.

Mr. Yelverton strongly recommended unanimity at that moment. It seemed, for prudential reasons, to be the general wish, and Mr. Fitzpatrick, the Viceroy's secretary, artfully seized on the moment of inconsiderate gratitude, and threw out a defiance to those who endeavored to diminish its unanimity. This to such a temper as Mr. Walshe's, had the effect intended, of causing a division—and the skillful secretary succeeded in his object.

On the division, the Recorder and Mr. Walshe alone divided on the minority, and Mr. Grattan's address was triumphantly carried, with all its imperfections; and a short period proved that these imperfections were neither few nor unimportant. The House adjourned amidst the universal acclamations of the ignorant and credulous people, and the constitutional arrangements between the two countries were fatally supposed, from the tenor of the speech and the address, to have been entirely and forever arranged to their mutual satisfaction.

It is here proper to pause and reflect upon the embarrassing situation into which this day's debate had thrown both nations; an embarrassment which, since that day, has never yet been completely terminated, and probably never will.

The transcendent merits of Mr. Grattan, the unparalleled brilliancy of his language, in moving the declaration of rights, his firmness and his patriotism had raised him above all his countrymen. That declaration, it was believed, had restored the liberties of his country, and given him a just claim to all the rewards and honors which even the glowing gratitude of that country could confer upon him. But, unfortunately, his



own honesty led him to a mistaken confidence in that of others. The courtly patriotism of Earl Charlemont, always inclining him to a blind principle of conciliation, had its influence on Mr. Grattan, who was a statesman, great in principle, but inefficient in detail; and the moderation of Lord Charlemont was not ineffective nor merely passive, when restraining the vigor of a mind that seemed to be created to think greatly and act decidedly, only upon great and decisive occasions.



Composed from Book of Kells.

## CHAPTER X.

CREDULITY OF THE IRISH PARLIAMENT—POPULARITY OF HENRY GRATTAN—HE IS OFFERED LARGE REWARDS FOR HIS SERVICES.

It is as extraordinary as it is true, that the weakness and foibles of Irish character were more strikingly displayed during this important discussion than upon any former occasion. A generous, ardent, credulous, unstatesmanlike sensibility appeared to have seized upon the whole assembly, and even the natural quickness of perception and acuteness of intellect, which the members of that House displayed on ordinary and trivial subjects, seemed totally to have forsaken them during this memorable debate—of more vital importance to the nation than any other that had taken place in the Irish Parliament.

The country gentlemen of Ireland, at all times bad casuists and worse lawyers, appeared on this occasion to close both their ears and their eyes, and to resign, with one accord, all exercise of judgment and discrimination. The word “unanimity” operated as a talisman amongst them, and silenced all objections. The very important observations of Sir Samuel Bradstreet and of Mr. Walshe were hardly listened to with patience. Mr. Flood himself seemed to be overwhelmed and manacled; and those axioms and that reasoning which were ultimately acceded to and adopted even by the British Ministers themselves, were on this night considered as a species of treason against the purity of the British Government, and the sincerity of the Irish Viceroy. No voice but that of congratulation, joy and confidence, could make itself heard. No suspicions durst be suggested, no murmurs durst be uttered. The scene was new to Ireland, and exultation took precedence for a time, of both reason and reflection.

Beauchamp Bagenal, representative for Carlow county, so soon as the flurry of mutual congratulations had a little subsided in the House, proposed a motion well adapted to that moment, and most happily coincident with the sentiments of the people. How far it had been premeditated, or arose from the impulse of the moment, no person acquainted with the character and eccentricities of Mr. Bagenal could possibly determine.

He was one of those men, who, born to a large inheritance,

and having no profession to interrupt their propensities, generally made in those times the grand tour of Europe, as the finishing parts of a gentleman's education. Mr. Bagenal followed the general course, and on that tour had made himself very conspicuous. He had visited every capital of Europe, and had exhibited the native original character of the Irish gentleman at every place he visited. In the splendor of his travelling establishment, he quite eclipsed the petty potentates with whom Germany was garnished. His person was fine, his manners open and generous, his spirit high, and his liberality profuse. During his tour, he had performed a variety of feats which were emblazoned in Ireland, and endeared him to his countrymen. He had fought a prince, jilted a princess, intoxicated the Doge of Venice, carried off a Duchess from Madrid, scaled the walls of a convent in Italy, narrowly escaped the Inquisition at Lisbon, concluded his exploits by a celebrated fencing match at Paris, and he returned to Ireland with a sovereign contempt for all continental men and manners, and an inveterate antipathy to all despotic kings and arbitrary governments.

Domesticated in his own mansion at Dunleekny, surrounded by a numerous and devoted tenantry, and possessed of a great territory, Mr. Bagenal determined to spend the residue of his days on his native soil, according to the usages and customs of country gentlemen, and he was shortly afterwards returned a representative to Parliament for the county of Carlow, by universal acclamation.

Though Mr. Bagenal did not take any active part in the general business of the Irish Parliament, he at least gave it a good example of public spirit and high-minded independence. His natural talents were far above mediocrity, but his singularities, in themselves extravagant, were increased by the intemperance of those times, and an excellent capacity was neutralized by inordinate dissipation. Prodiggally hospitable, irregular, extravagant, uncertain, vivacious, the chase, the turf, the sod and the bottle divided a great portion of his intellect between them, and generally left for the use of Parliament only so much as he could spare from his other occupations.

However, in supporting the independence and prosperity of Ireland, he always stood in the foremost ranks.

Liberal and friendly, but obstinate and refractory, above all his contemporaries, he had a perfect indifference for the

opinions of the world, when they at all differed from his own, and he never failed to perform whatever came uppermost in his thoughts, with the most perfect contempt as to the notions which might be formed either of his rectitude or impropriety.

He was one of the first country gentlemen who raised a Volunteer regiment in the county of Carlow. He commanded several military corps, and was one of the last Volunteer Colonels in Ireland who could be prevailed upon to discontinue the reviews of their regiments, or to relinquish that noble, patriotic, and unprecedented institution. However, he was, on this occasion, as politically short-sighted as he was nationally credulous. He could see nothing but sincerity in the Viceroy, honor in the British Cabinet, and an eternal cordiality between the two nations; and before the constitutional arrangement was well begun, he fancied it was completely concluded. His admiration of Mr. Grattan was unqualified and extravagant, and it was with an honest zeal and pure sincerity he rose to propose a measure, at that period the most popular and gratifying to the Irish nation.

Having passed many eulogiums on Mr. Grattan's services to Ireland, he gave notice of an intended motion, "that a committee should be appointed, to consider and report what sum the Irish Parliament should grant, to build a suitable mansion and purchase an estate for their deliverer."

In prefacing this notice, Mr. Bagenal, full of candor and credulity, used some expressions, so unfortunately anti-prophetic, as to render them worthy of marked observation. He said that Mr. Grattan had saved the country from an iron age, and unequivocally restored a golden one to his own country forever. "By our affectionate alliance with Great Britain, we shall not only be benefited ourselves, but shall see a beloved sister revive from her misfortunes. This great man has crowned the work forever; under his auspices the throne of freedom is fixed on a basis so firm, and which will always be so well supported by the influence the people must acquire under his system, that, with the help of God, there is no danger, even of Parliament itself ever being able to shake it; nor shall any Parliament be ever again profanely styled omnipotent."

Mr. Grattan attempted to make some observations, but his voice was drowned in the general applause; and the House adjourned without further observations.

He alone now occupied the entire hearts of the people.

They had no room for any other individual. Almost frantic with gratitude to their deliverer, they cried out that the doctrines of Molyneux had triumphed in the same place where they had before been consigned to infamy. But the day of those pure and lofty feelings had passed away. A broken down constitution seldom recovers its pristine elasticity, and that enthusiastic, proud, patriotic spirit which signalized the Irish nation in 1782, driven to its tomb by misrule and by misfortune, can never rise again but on some congenial crisis.

The British Ministry and Parliament now began to feel their own weakness. Their intolerance degenerated into fear; and responsibility began to stare them in the face. The loss of America had been got over by their predecessors without an impeachment; but that of Ireland would not have passed over with the same impunity. The British Cabinet had already signed the capitulation, and thought it impossible to carry it too soon into execution. Bills to enact the concessions demanded by Ireland were therefore prepared with an expedition nearly bordering on precipitancy. The 6th of George the First, declaratory of, and establishing the supremacy of England, and the eternal dependence of Ireland on the Parliament and Cabinet of Great Britain, was now hastily repealed, without debate, or any qualification by the British Legislature. This repeal received the royal assent, and a copy was instantly transmitted to the Irish Viceroy, and communicated by circulars to the Volunteer commanders.

Chap. LIII. An Act, to repeal an act made in the sixth year of the reign of his late Majesty King George the First, intituled, An Act for the better securing the *dependency* of the kingdom of Ireland upon *the crown of Great Britain*.

Whereas, an act was passed in the sixth year of the reign of His late Majesty King George the First, intituled: An Act for the better securing the *dependency* of the kingdom of Ireland upon the *crown* of Great Britain; may it please your Most Excellent Majesty, that it may be enacted, and be it enacted, by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the consent and advice of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that from and after the passing of this Act, *the above mentioned Act, and the several matters and things therein contained, shall be, and is, and are hereby repealed.*



Thus, the doctrine of Blackstone, that venerated Druid of English jurisprudence, who by his dictum had tried to seal the slavery of the Irish people, was surrendered as unconstitutional, and renounced by the very same legislature that had enacted it. As England drooped, Ireland raised her head; and for a moment she was arrayed with all the exterior insignia of an independent nation.

On the 30th of May, 1782, Mr. Bagenal resumed the subject of the reward to Mr. Grattan; and after a short but animated speech, moved that “£100,000 should be granted by parliament, to purchase an estate, and build a suitable mansion, as the reward of gratitude by the Irish nation, for his eminent services to his country.” No member could directly oppose a measure so merited, so popular, and so honorable to the nation. No absolute murmur was heard; but the magnitude of the sum gave rise to many incidental observations, and some friends of Mr. Grattan endeavored to impress the house with the idea that he was altogether adverse to the measure, and conceived that his honors and gratification would be greater by the feeling of having served his country without reward than that arising from its pure and unsophisticated enjoyment.

This idea in modern times, and under Mr. Grattan’s peculiar circumstances, was considered less the result of a true pride than of a patriotic vanity. Roman precedents were not applicable to Ireland, and his paternal estates were not sufficiently ample to support so distinguished a man in the dignity of his station. And the wisest friends of Mr. Grattan considered such a grant not as a mercenary recompense, but the reward of a patriotic virtue, conferred by the gratitude of a nation to elevate a deliverer.

While the House seemed to hesitate as to the wisest course of carrying the proposed grant into immediate execution, a most unexpected circumstance took place, which, though in its results of no important consequence, forms one of the most interesting anecdotes of Irish events, develops the insidious artifices to which the Government resorted, and forms an episode without a precedent in ancient or modern annals.

Mr. Thomas Connolly, who, as a leading member of the Whig party, had entirely connected himself with the Duke of Portland, and though not holding any ministerial office, was a Privy Councillor, and considered to be particularly confidential in the councils of the Viceroy, after many eulogiums

upon Mr Grattan's unparalleled services to Ireland, stated, "That the Duke of Portland felt equally with the Irish people, the high value of those services, and that he was authorized by the Lord Lieutenant to express in the strongest terms, the sense he entertained of the public virtue of Mr. Grattan, and of his eminent and important services to Ireland; and as the highest proof he could give of his admiration and respect for that distinguished personage, he (the Lord Lieutenant) begged to offer, as a part of the intended grant to Mr. Grattan, the Viceregal Palace in the Phoenix Park, to be settled on Mr. Grattan and his heirs forever, as a suitable residence for so meritorious a person."

The Viceroy of His Britannic Majesty offering to a private individual a grant forever of the King's best palace in Ireland was repugnant to the principle of Monarchical Governments; while Mr. Bagenal's proposal of a grant by the House of Commons, as a reward for the public services of one of their own independent members, appeared to the Viceroy as making the people everything and the administration nothing. He saw clearly that the public spirit was irresistible, and that the grant must pass, and the Viceroy determined, at any sacrifice, to give it a tinge of ministerial generosity, and thereby deaden as much as possible the brilliancy and effect of a popular proceeding. He knew that if his proposal through Mr. Connolly should be accepted, the grant would have very considerably changed its democratic complexion, the prerogative would be somewhat preserved, and Mr. Grattan no longer considered as deriving his reward exclusively from the gratitude of his countrymen, the Crown would have its share in a claim to his acknowledgments; and thus the merit of the favor be divided between the people and the minister.

This magnificent and unexampled offer, at first view, appeared flattering and showy; at the second, it appeared deceptious; and at the third, inadmissible. Delicacy prevented any debate on the subject, and it would have died away without a remark or observation, and would have been rejected by a judicious silence, had not the indiscretion of Colonel Fitzpatrick betrayed the whole feeling and duplicity of the Government, and opened the eyes of many to the jealousy and designs of his Grace's administration. Though the secretary was extremely disposed to serve Mr. Grattan individually, the entire failure of the plan, and the frigid manner in which

the royal offer had been received on every side, hurt his official pride, and affected him extremely. He recollected his ministry but forgot his discretion, and he could no longer restrain himself from some observations equally ill-timed and injudicious.

Colonel Fitzpatrick was the brother of the Earl of Upper Ossory. Though not an expert diplomatist, he was well selected to make his way amongst the Irish gentry, and consequently carry into effect the objects of the British ministers, and the deceptions of the Duke of Portland. He was ingenuous and convivial, friendly and familiar, and theoretically honest, even in politics. His name was musical to the ear of that short-sighted community (the Irish gentry), and his casual indiscretions in Parliament were kindly attributed to his undesigning nature, and of all qualities, an appearance of unguarded openness is most imposing upon the Irish people. But the office of a minister or of a secretary is too well adapted to alter, if not the nature, at least the habits of a private gentleman; and, as a matter of course, he relinquishes his candor when he commences his diplomacy.

Whatever his individual feelings might have been as Colonel Fitzpatrick, it is impossible that in his capacity of secretary, Mr. Bagenal's motion could have given him any gratification. He declared that "he conceived the power of rewarding eminent men was one of the noblest of the Royal Prerogatives, which were certainly a part of the constitution. He did not wish to be considered as giving a sullen acquiescence, but he conceived that marks of favor of this nature always appertained to the Crown alone, and he should have wished that this grant had come from the Royal hand; but, as the man was unprecedented, so was the grant; and he hoped this would not be considered as a precedent on future occasions."

By these few but comprehensive observations of the secretary, the apparent magnificent liberality of the Viceroy appeared in its real character, and dwindled into a narrow subterfuge of ministerial jealousy. Mr. Connolly appeared to have traveled out of his station, and officiously to have assumed the office of a minister, for a deceptive purpose, and lent himself to a little artifice, to trepan the Parliament and humiliate the people.

By this rejected tender the Whig administration gained no credit; they evinced a disposition to humble the Crown with-

out elevating the people, and to wind the laurels of both around their own temples

The Viceroy considered a grant by the Commons too democratic; and the Parliament considered the Viceroy's tender too ministerial. Mr. Grattan was a servant of the Irish people, and was utterly unconnected with the British Government. In every point of view, therefore, the Viceroy's offer, at that moment, was improper, and derogatory alike to the Crown and the individual. The Viceroy of Ireland proposing on behalf of the King of England, to Ireland's great patriot to reward his services for having emancipated his country from the domination of Great Britain, was an incident as extraordinary as had ever occurred in any government, and, emanating from that of England, told, in a single sentence, the whole history of her terrors, her jealousy, her shallow artifice and humbled arrogance.

This proposal was linked with many other insidious objects, but they were too obvious to be successful, and only disclosed a shallow cunning. His Excellency had perceived in Ireland the phenomena of a governing people, without a ruling democracy,—an armed and unrestrained population, possessing, without abusing, the powers of sovereignty, and turning their authority not to the purposes of turbulence or sedition, but to those of Constitution, order and tranquillity. These armed associations, however irreproachable in their conduct, were unprecedented in their formation, and were fairly considered by His Grace with a lively jealousy, as tending to establish a species of popular aristocracy, dangerous to the very nature of the British Constitution

Many friends of Mr. Grattan, or those who professed to be so, declared he would not accept of so large a sum as that proposed by Mr. Bagenal; but this was a mistaken or an affected view of that subject. In fact the grant itself, not its amount, was the only point for dignified consideration. However, after a considerable discussion, it was diminished, by Mr. Grattan's friends, to the sum of fifty thousand pounds, which was unanimously voted to him; and never had a reward more merited or more honorable been conferred on any patriot by any nation.

The times when civic crowns conferred honors no longer existed; the property had become essential for importance in society. The Irish Parliament had before them a sad and recent example of the necessity of such a reward, in the fate



of Dr. Lucas, one of the best friends of Ireland, who had sacrificed himself to support his principles; a man who had, so far as his talents admitted, propagated and applied the doctrines of the great Molyneux; and, like him, was banished, and, like him, declared a traitor; who had sat a Representative for the metropolis of Ireland; and whose statue still adorns the Royal Exchange of Dublin; a venerable Senator, sinking under the pressure of years and of infirmity, carried into their House to support its liberty,—sickening in their cause and expiring in their service; a rare example of patriotism and independence; yet suffered to die in indigence, and leave an orphan offspring to become the prey of famine. With such a reproachable warning before the nation, it was for the people, not for the Crown, to take care that they never should be disgraced by similar ingratitude. In these degenerate times, honors give no sustenance; and in the perverted practices of modern policy, it is not the province of the Monarch to reward the patriot. And this event leads the historian to others still more important

Upon every important debate on the claims of Ireland in the British and Imperial Parliaments, the native character and political propensities of the Irish people had been uniformly made a subject of animated discussion; and the loyalty of that Nation to her Kings had been put directly in issue, by both her friends and her enemies; by the latter as a pretext for having abrogated her Constitution; by the former as a defense against libel and exaggeration; each party asserting that the past events of Irish history justify their reasoning, and afford evidence of their allegations.

It is, therefore, at this important epoch highly expedient that this controversy of opinions as to the loyalty of the Irish people, though probably digressive, should be decided by unequivocal historic matters of fact, undeniable by either party, and thereby, that the true principles of a long persecuted and calumniated people should be no longer mistaken nor misrepresented.

A reference to the authentic Annals and Records of Irish History indisputably proves that the unrelenting cruelties and misruling of their British Governors in early ages, goading the wretched natives to insurrection, formed the first pretext for afterwards branding them with an imputation of indigenous disloyalty, thereby exciting an inveterate prejudice against the Irish people; which, becoming hereditary, has



descended, though with diminished virulence, from father to son throughout the English nation.

These calumnies had their full and fatal operation, as an argument in urging the necessity of a Legislative Union; an argument at once refuted by reference even in the modern events of 1782, and to the unexampled moderation, forbearance and loyalty of the Irish nation, who sought only a full participation in the British Constitution, though the moral and physical power of that ardent people were then consolidated by their patriotism, and rendered irresistible by their numbers, their discipline and their energy.

At that awful crisis of the British Empire, the Irish were an armed and triumphant people—England a defeated and trembling nation—Ireland was in the bloom of energy and of vigor, England on the couch of discomfiture and malady. And if the spirit of indigenous disaffection, so falsely imputed to the Irish nation, had, in reality, existed, she had then full scope and ample powers to pursue and effect all its disposition for an eternal separation.

It is not, however, by modern or isolated events alone, that a fair judgment can be formed of the characteristic attributes of any nation, still less so of a worried and misgoverned people. It is only by recurring to remoter periods, thence tracing, step by step, the conduct of Ireland throughout all her provocations, her miseries and her persecutions, and then comparing the extent of their sufferings, her endurance, and her loyalty with those of her sister countries during the same periods, that the comparative character of both can be justly appreciated, and those calumnies which have weighed so heavily on her reputation can be effectually refuted.

It is a matter of indisputable fact, that during the twenty reigns which succeeded the first submission of the Irish princes, the fidelity of Ireland to the British monarchs was but seldom interrupted, and that Irish soldiers were not unfrequently brought over to England to defend their English sovereigns against the insurrections of the English rebels.

But when we peruse the authenticated facts of British annals during the same twenty reigns, we find an unextinguishable spirit of disaffection to their princes, and that an insatiable thirst for rebellion and disloyalty signalized every reign, and almost every year of British history, during the same period; that above thirty civil wars raged within the English nation; four of their monarchs were dethroned; three

of their kings were murdered, and during four centuries the standard of rebellion scarcely ever ceased to wave over some portion of that distracted island, and so deeply had disloyalty been grafted in the very nature of the British nobles and the British people, that insurrection and regicide, if not the certain, were the expected consequences of every coronation.

Through these observations, the eye of England will at length be directed to these events. They will then be convinced that there lurked within the bosom of Great Britain herself the germs of a disquietude more unemitting, a licentiousness more inflammatory, a fanaticism more intolerant, and a political agitation more dangerous and unjustifiable, than any which even her most inveterate foes can justly extract from an impartial history of the libelled country.

The short digression must have the advantage of illustrating the principles which have led to the transactions of 1798 and 1800, those gloomy epochs of Irish calamity; it may enlighten that dark and profound ignorance of Irish history and transactions which still obscures the intellect of the Irish people, and even leads members of the United Parliament to avow their utter ignorance of the very country and people for whom they are at the same moment so severely legislating. Those men are surely the most injurious to the general tranquillity of a state, the collected power of united nations and the safety of the common weal, whose prejudices, ignorance and bigotry lead them by wanton irritation to engender uncongenial feelings in eight millions of so powerful, ardent and generous a portion of the empire.



## CHAPTER XI.

### COMPARISON OF GRATTAN AND FLOOD—CHARACTER OF JOHN PHILPOT CURRAN.

Mr. Flood had become most prominent amongst the Irish patriots. He was a man of profound abilities, high manners and great experience in the affairs of Ireland. He had deep information, and extensive capacity, and a solid judgment. His experience made him sceptical—Mr. Grattan's honesty made him credulous. Mr. Grattan was a great patriot—Mr. Flood was a great statesman. The first was qualified to achieve the liberties of a country—the latter to entangle a complicated constitution. Grattan was the more brilliant man, Flood the able senator. Flood was the wiser politician, Grattan was the purer. The one used more logic, the other made more proselytes. Unrivalled, save by each other, they were equal in their fortitude; but Grattan was the more impetuous. Flood had qualities for a great prince, Grattan for a virtuous one, and a combination of both would have made a glorious monarch. They were great enough to be in contest; but they were not great enough to be in harmony; both were too proud; but neither had sufficient magnanimity to merge his jealousies in the cause of his country.

It was deeply lamented that at a moment, critical and vital to Ireland beyond all former precedent, an inveterate and almost vulgar hostility should have prevented the co-operation of men whose counsels and talents would have secured its independence. But that jealous lust for undivided honor, the eternal enemy of patriots and of liberty, led them away even beyond the ordinary limits of Parliamentary decorum. The old courtiers fanned the flame, the new ones added fuel to it, and the independence of Ireland was eventually lost by the distracting result of their animosities, which in a few years was used as an instrument to annihilate that very legislature, the preservation of which had been the theme of their hostilities.

This irreconcilable difference of opinion between two of the ablest men of Ireland generated the most ruinous consequences for that ill-fated country. Both had their adherents, as pertinacious as themselves. The simple repeal had con-

tented Mr. Grattan and Earl Charlemont; the Renunciation Act was enforced by the perseverance of Mr. Flood and the people, and still considered inconclusive. Both parties adhered to their own conviction; nothing could warp the opinions of either; and to the day of their death their opinions remained unaltered and events proved that *both* were mistaken.

By those two statutes, by daily political discussions amongst the Volunteers, and by a multitude of literary publications, circulated with activity, the people were at length informed of the plain, true facts of their own case and situation. They were reminded, as at their first formation, that Great Britain had long usurped the power of binding Ireland by acts of Parliament, and that Ireland had thereby been reduced to a state of constitutional slavery; that the British Government, intending to carry its usual usurpation to an extraordinary length, had passed an Act in "the British Parliament," during the reign of George I., "binding Ireland by British statutes," cutting off at once every branch of Irish liberty; that this statute did not affect to originate any new power by England, but declared peremptorily that such a right had always existed in the English Parliament, and always would be acted upon when it suited the convenience of the British Ministry. They were reminded that when the Irish nation became too wise and too powerful to be longer retained in subjection, England (in order to pacify the Irish nation) had herself voluntarily repealed that statute declaratory of her pre-existing power; but did not, by that repeal, renounce the right which she had so long exercised, nor did she in any way declare that she would never *re-enact it*; that the same right remained, in abeyance; nor had England admitted in any way that she had been *originally* erroneous in enacting it.

These being the plain and undisputed facts of the case, it was thence argued that the mere repeal of the declaratory statute, so far from definitively renouncing the existing right of legislation over Ireland confirmed it; and, by repealing, only enacted the expediency of discontinuing its exercise under existing circumstances. The statute which had *declared* that there existed such a pre-existing right in England to bind Ireland, was indeed repealed by England; but still though the declaration was repealed, the right was not renounced,



and remained only dormant till it might be advisable, under a change of circumstances, to re-declare it by a new statute.

The simple repeal of any statute certainly leaves the original jurisdiction untouched, exactly in the same situation as before it, and with an undiminished right to re-enact it as might be convenient; and the 6th of George I, its enactments and its repeal, stood exactly in the same situation as any enactment and repeal of any ordinary statute of the same monarch. It was therefore argued that it had become indispensably necessary for the security of Ireland that the British Parliament should, by statutes of their own, not only repeal the Act declaratory of Irish independence, but also expressly and forever renounce the *existence* of any such *legislative authority* over Ireland, or future renewal of such usurpation, without which renunciation Ireland had no guarantee for the constitution

Had the statute of George I been an assumption of a new authority to legislate for Ireland, its simple repeal would have at once admitted the usurpation of such modern assumption; but as that statute was the recognition and declaration of pre-existing authority, coeval with the British Parliament itself, a repeal could not be binding on any future Parliament, which might at any future time be disposed to re-enact it.

But a statute of the British Parliament and the King of England, by his royal assent, directly renouncing the *pre-existence* of such assumed right by England, pledged all future Parliaments (as far as Parliaments can be pledged) to the same principle, and also definitely pledged all future Kings of England against any future re-assumption or exercise of such power over the Kingdom of Ireland; and though the Kings of England and Ireland must always be the same individual, the realms were totally distinct, their crowns were distinct, though on the same head, and Ireland, possessing her own independent legislature, any such future attempt by a King of England would then be a direct breach of the law of nations, and a dereliction of his Irish office by the King of Ireland.

These arguments became a universal subject of discussion; and were rendered of still greater interest by debates, which every day arose on other points interwoven with the arguments. Numerous British statutes had been enacted, expressly naming and legislating for Ireland, as if enacted by its own Parliaments. All these remained still in activity, and

great inconvenience must necessarily have arisen from an immediate and indiscriminate suspension of their operation. None were enacted in Ireland to supply their places; and great difficulties were occurring. Modern England could not be humiliated by generously declaring that her ancestors had exceeded their constitutional authority as to Ireland. On the contrary, it should have been her proudest boast to have done justice by avowing it. This was not humiliation—it was true glory; and when England, shortly afterwards, actually renounced forever, by the act of her own legislature, her domination over Ireland, she could not have been much gratified by the temporizing complaisance of the Irish Parliament.

It is also very remarkable that, though Mr. Walshe and the Recorder alone divided against the address of Mr. Grattan, in a very short time afterwards there was scarcely a member of Parliament, or a man in Ireland who did not concur decidedly in their opinions, and even the British ministry and the British legislature, by their own voluntary act, confirmed their doctrine. Public discussions on one great subject seldom fail to involve reflections upon others, and these naturally brought the Irish people to discuss the imperfections of their own Commons House of Parliament, and to perceive that without a comprehensive reform of that department, there was no security against the instability of events and the duplicity of England.

The following letter, however, from Mr. Grattan to the author, appears to throw new and material light upon the subject, and to develop the individual views and politics of Mr. Grattan himself, more clearly than any speech or document heretofore published.

This letter also proves, more than volumes, the insincerity of the Duke of Portland and the English Government, and their distinction between the words “recognized” and “established,” leaves their political reservation beyond the reach of scepticism.

This letter shows probably the ruin that a want of *co-operation* between two great men brought upon the country; and, above all, it incidentally exposes the courtly, credulous and feeble politics of Earl Charlemont, so injurious to the public cause, and so depressing to the vigor and energies of its greatest advocate.

To Mr. Ponsonby's chance *remissness* on a future crisis is attributable the public loss of the Irish legislature, as Lord

Charlemont's political courtesy was, on this, fatal to its security. Patriots without energy, as bees without stings, may buzz in sunshine, but can neither defend their hive nor assail their enemy.

“House of Commons, London, March 2nd.

“My Dear Barrington.

“I am excessively sorry that your health has been impaired, and I hope it will soon be restored.

“I will get you the *Whig-Club* resolution. They proposed to obtain an internal reform of Parliament, in which they partly succeeded; they proposed to *prevent an union*, in which they failed.

“The address that declared no political question remained between the two countries, had in view to stop the growth of demand, and preserve entire the annexation of the Crown. It was, to us, an object to prevent any future political discussion touching the relative state of the two countries; because we might not be so strong at that moment. And it was an object to us and to the English Minister, to guard against any discussion that might shake the connection to which we were equally attached. Fox wished sincerely for the liberty of Ireland without reserve. He was an enemy to an union, and wished for the freedom to be annexed to his name.

“The Act of Repeal was a part of a treaty with England. A declaratory Act of title is the affirmance of the existence of a former title, the repeal is a disaffirmance of any such title; the more so when accompanied by a transfer of the possession, viz., the transfer of the final judicature and the legislation for the colony-trade of the new-acquired islands, made in consequence of a protest by Ireland against the claim of England.

“The repeal was not any confession of usurpation—it was a disclaimer of any right. You may suppose what I have said, *unsaid*. A man of spirit may say *that*; but he will hesitate to unsay *word by word*. That was the case of England. She would not in so many words *confess* her usurpation, nor did she; on the contrary, when they pressed her, she exercised the power and said, ‘The constitution of Ireland is established and ascertained in future by the authority of the British Parliament.’ It was proposed in the House of Commons to change the words and say, ‘recognized forever.’ They agreed to the word ‘forever,’ and refused the word ‘recognized,’ and kept

in the word 'established.' This I call making Ireland free with a vengeance.

"I wish, in your History, you would put down the argument on both sides. I can get you Flood's published by his authority

"I am excessively thankful for the many handsome things you have said of me.

"Yours most truly,

"HENRY GRATTAN

"Chevalier Barrington, Boulogne, pres Paris "

Their late constitutional acquirements, though apparently confirmed beyond the power of revocation, might be yet a precarious tenure, whilst Ireland had a House of Commons, so framed and elected as to be susceptible of relapse into its former degradation, and though their constitution was not in any state of present danger, future insecurity must be the necessary consequence of a feeble or corrupt representation.

Over the Lords and over the Crown, the control of the people was insufficient and uncertain. It was just, therefore, that they should have a counterpoise, by a House of Commons of their own free selection; and events have since proved that the suspicions were prophetic.

These, and such like reflections, led the Irish people gradually, according to their capacities, into a train of constitutional deductions; and suggested topics as to the reform and purity of Parliament, which they had never before thought of.

The great body of a people can never be capable of that cruel and discriminating course of reasoning, which individuals or limited delegations are capable of exercising, hence they too frequently, in great general assemblies, follow, whether right or wrong, the sentiments of those who reason more plausibly than themselves, or whose elocution grasps at their feelings and gives them a factitious superiority over ordinary understandings.

It was impossible that the great body of the Irish Volunteers, which had now assumed the guardianship of Ireland, could be capable of methodical, deep, systematic reasoning, or of unerring political deduction, from arguments of enthusiastic and heated orators; but a great proportion reasoned by that instinctive power which nature confers on shrewd, uncultivated capacities, and on none more than the humble orders of the Irish people; they caught the strong features of their case and their constitution; they knew that they had



contributed by their arms and by their energy, to the common cause of their country; they felt that they had been victorious; they listened attentively to their officers, who, more learned than the soldiers, endeavored to adapt their explanations to the strong, coarse minds which they sought to enlighten; they instructed them as to existing circumstances, and to future possibilities, and thus endeavored to teach those whom they commanded, not only how to act, but why that principle of action was demanded by their country.

At this time, the visionary and impracticable theories of modern days had no place among the objects of the armed societies of Ireland; but the naturally shrewd and intelligent capacities of the Irish people were easily convinced, that, without some constitutional reform in the mode of electing the Commons House of Parliament, they could have no adequate security for permanent independence. They learned that paroxysms of liberty which give rise to revolutions do not endure for ever, and that the spirit of Irish freedom, which had affected the liberation of their country, might expire; that the independence of the constitution, unless protected by a free parliament never could be secure, that the enemy might attempt to regain her position and that the battle would then be fought again under multiplied disadvantages

Such a reform, therefore, as might insure the uninfluenced election and individual independence of the Irish representatives, appeared to be indispensable, not as a theoretical innovation, nor of a revolutionary complexion, but as a practical recurrence to the first and finest elements of the constitution as it then existed, without any deviation from the principles on which it had been with so much wisdom originally constructed. This species of reformation, and none other, was that which the Irish nation so judiciously sought for; nor were they without high authority and precedent to countenance that requisition. Mr. Pitt, that great but mischievous and mistaken statesman, at that time professed himself to be a reforming patriot, but it was profession only—his deep and solid intellect was soon perverted by the pride of his successes, and confidence in his omnipotence. He reigned at an unexampled era; his fertile and aspiring but arrogant genius led him into a series of grand and magnificent delusions, generating systems and measures which, while professing to save, sapped the outworks of the British constitution, and accelerated, if not caused the financial ruin in which he left



his country. He, however, lived long enough to rule as a minister by that system of corruption which, as a patriot, he had reprobated; and to extinguish the Irish Parliament, by the loyalty and attachment of which his government had been uniformly supported.

The Irish people coincided with Mr. Pitt, as to the necessity of a reform; nor did the leading reformers of Ireland materially differ with him in the details of that reformation; the principle was admitted by both nations, but Mr. Flood was undisguised, and Mr. Pitt was in masquerade.

The course of reasoning which led the armed associations of Ireland at that period to decide upon the imperative necessity of a reform of Parliament, was of that sober and convincing nature, which without sophism or declamation, proves itself by the force of uncontrovertible premises, and of plain and simple deductions.

1st. It could not be denied that the fundamental principle of the British constitution is a perfect relative equipoise and distinctiveness of its three component estates, the King, the Lords, and the representatives of the people.

2nd. It could not be denied that any deviation from the equipoise and distinctiveness necessarily altered the political symmetry of the whole and destroyed that counteracting quality of the three estates, and on the preservation of which public liberty entirely depended.

3rd. It could not be denied that the Members of the House of Commons, forming the third estate, should, by the theory of the constitution, be persons freely selected by the people themselves, to guard above all things against any coalition of the other estates (the Crown and the Peers), which coalition must endanger the liberties of the people, by extending the prerogatives and powers of the Executive Government beyond the limits the constitution restrains them to.

4th. It could not be denied that any one individual arrogating to himself and actually exercising a power to nominate, and by his own sole will elect and return representatives to the House of Commons, sent them into that assembly, not to speak the sentiments of the people, but the sentiments of the individual who nominated them, and caused an immediate deviation from the fundamental principles of the British constitution; but where members of the House of Peers so nominated and returned persons to sit and vote as members in the House of Commons, it was, in fact, the House of Peers voting

by proxy in the House of Commons; thereby destroying at once the independence and distinctiveness of the third estate, and enabling the Crown and the Peers, by coalition, to control the Commons, and establish a despotic throne and an arbitrary aristocracy.

The power, therefore, constitutionally conferred on the King by his Royal prerogative of creating Peers, coupled with the power unconstitutionally practiced by the Peers, of creating Commoners, left the people no sufficiently counter-acting constitutional protection for their liberties

5th. It could not be denied that purchasing the representation of the people in the Commons House of Parliament for money and selling the exercise of that representation for office, was a constitutional crime of great magnitude; and that when such a practice was publicly countenanced it, of course, destroyed the purity of Parliament, the principle of representation and safeguard of the constitution.

But if these purchases were made by servants of the Executive Government, in trust, for the uses and purposes of its ministers to enable them to carry measures through the legislature, which their naked strength, official character or the merits of the measure might be unable to affect, it was unequivocal that such practices put an end totally to all security in the constitution and that the people must owe the enjoyment of their liberties only to the timidity, the forbearance or the possible wisdom of an official oligarchy.

The Volunteers now examined existing matters of fact in Ireland as applicable to these premises, and comparing the one with the other, the conclusion became so plain and obvious to the humblest capacities, that the necessity of reform or modification in the mode of electing members for the Parliament of Ireland required no further agreement

To ascertain the relative matters of fact, as applicable to these premises, the Volunteers caused to be printed and published lists of their House of Commons, designating the mode of election of every individual; the individual by whose personal influence each representative was elected; the number of persons who nominally returned the member, and, as far as could be ascertained, the money or valuable consideration paid for such unconstitutional representation. The result of the inquiry left no room to doubt the applicability of those inquiries to a great proportion of the Commons House of Parliament. The Earl of Ely nominated nine members to the

House of Commons. The Earl of Shannon nominated seven; and above twenty other members of the House of Lords nominated and elected members for the House of Commons. Many individuals openly sold their patronage for money to the best bidder, others returned members at the nomination of the Viceroy or his secretary, and it appeared that the number of representatives elected freely by the people, upon constitutional principles, did not compose one-fourth of the Irish Commons.

An internal reform of Parliament was, on full consideration, deemed quite incompetent to meet the danger. Numerous statutes had been passed to punish, as a public crime, the bribery of an elector, but no law reached the individual who possessed and exercised an influence over electors, and then secretly sold that influence for money or for title. The elector who corruptly voted was considered as a criminal; but the man who corruptly bought and sold his vote was tolerated. On the fullest investigation, therefore, it appeared that in Ireland the third estate was, in a considerable degree nominated by the second estate; that both the second and third estates were influenced by the first estate, and that the whole symmetry and equipoise of the constitution were theoretic, but had no solid or permanent existence.

The Volunteers at length determined to demand a reform of Parliament and to bring the measure before the existing Commons in a garb which they conceived would render it irresistible; and from the determination arose the formation of a national representative convention of patriotic delegates selected from the armed regiments—the most extraordinary, animating, but unprecedented assembly ever yet beheld in the midst of a people, at the moment enjoying an ascertained constitution.

Had this assembly been conducted with discriminating caution and unflinching firmness, it might have attained all its objects, and have affected a complete renovation of the British constitution, through the Irish people. England would not long have delayed acting on the successful precedent of Ireland. This extraordinary meeting, however, though its objects were not effectuated, brought forward a great mass of talent and of patriotism which had theretofore lain dormant.

During the progress of all political reforms and revolutions, men have been frequently found pressing themselves





JOHN PHILPOT CURRAN.



forward into public notice, solely by the strength of their talents and the power of their energies; springing at once from the humblest ranks of obscurity to the highest class of reputation.

One of those luminaries was about this period seen arising in Ireland, whose celebrity in that country had no competitor.

John Philpot Curran, a person of humble origin, of careless habits, and contemptible exterior, rose at once to give a new lustre and spirit to an already highly enlightened and spirited profession. He had passed through the University of Dublin unsignalized by any very peculiar honors, and was admitted to the Irish bar, scarcely known and totally unpatronized. With the higher orders he had no intercourse, and had contracted manners and adopted a kind of society tending rather to disqualify him for advancement, but whatever disadvantages he suffered from humble birth were soon lost sight of amid the brilliancy of his talents, and a comparison of what he had been with what he rose to, rendered the attainments of his genius the more justly celebrated. Never did eloquence appear in so many luminous forms, or so many affecting modulations, as in that gifted personage. Every quality which could form a popular orator was in him combined, and it seemed as if nature had stolen some splendid attribute from all former declaimers to deck out and embellish her adopted favorite. On ordinary occasions his language was copious, frequently eloquent, yet generally unequal, but, on great ones the variety of his elocution, its luxuriance, its effect, were quite unrivaled, solemn, ludicrous, dramatic, argumentative, humorous, sublime, in irony invincible, in pathos overwhelming, in the alterations of bitter invective and of splendid eulogy, totally unparalleled; wit relieved the monotony of narrative, and classic imagery elevated the rank of forensic declamation. The wise, the weak, the vulgar, the elevated, the ignorant, the learned heard and were affected; he had language for them all. He commanded, alternately, the tear or the laugh, and at all times acquired a despotic ascendancy over the most varied auditory.

These were the endowments of early Curran; and these were the qualities, which, united to an extraordinary professional versatility, enabled him to shoot like a meteor beyond the sphere of all his contemporaries.

In private and convivial society many of his public qualities accompanied him in their fullest vigor. His wit was in-

finite and indefatigable. A dramatic eye anticipated the flights of an unbounded fancy; but the flashes of his wit never wounded the feelings of his society; except, perhaps, those minds of contracted jealousy, which shrink up from the reluctant consciousness of inferiority. He was, however, at times, very unequal. As in a great metropolis (to use one of his own illustrations), "the palace and the hovel, splendor and squalidness, magnificence and misery, are seen grouped and contrasted within the same precincts"; there were occasions when his wit sunk into ribaldry; his sublimity degenerated to grossness, and his eloquence to vulgarity; yet his strength was evident even in his weakness. Hercules, spinning as a concubine, still was Hercules; and, probably, had Curran been devoid of these singular contrarieties, he might have glided into a brilliant sameness, and, like his great contemporary, Burgh, though a more admired man, he would probably have been a less celebrated personage.

The innumerable difficulties he had to encounter in early life were not easy to conquer, but once conquered, they added an impetus to his progress. His ordinary, mean, and trifling person; his culpable negligence of dress, and all those disadvantageous attributes of early indigence were imperceptible or forgotten amidst his talent, which seldom failed to gain a decided victory over the prejudices even of those who were predetermined to condemn him.

His political life was unvaried; from the moment he became a member of the Irish Parliament his temperature never changed. He pursued the same course, founded on the same principles. He had closely connected himself in party and in friendship with Mr George Ponsonby; but he more than equalled that gentleman in the sincerity of his politics. From the commencement to the conclusion of his public life he was the invariable advocate of the Irish people; he never for a moment deserted their interest or abandoned their defense. He started from obscurity with the love of Ireland in his heart, and while that heart beat it was his ruling passion.

As a mere lawyer, he was in no estimation; but, as an able advocate he had no rival, and, in his skill and powers of interrogation, he vastly excelled all his rivals. He never failed to uphold the rights and independence of the Irish bar on every occasion where its privileges were trenching upon; and the bench trembled before him when it merited his animad-

versions. None ever assailed him publicly who was not overthrown in the contest, and even the haughty arrogance of Fitzgibbon seldom hazarded an attack, being certain of this discomfiture.

Mr. Curran was appointed Master of the Rolls (Mr. Ponsoby then Lord Chancellor). He was disappointed in not obtaining a legal situation more adapted to his description of talents. He was also chagrined at not having obtained a seat in the Imperial Parliament and at length resigned his office upon a pension of £2,700 per annum. He died at Brompton on the 14th of October, 1817, after a short illness, and now "not a stone tells where he lies." His funeral was private and he was buried in the yard of Paddington Church. He was never fond of show and in his latter days he both sought and obtained obscurity. Of the close of his life we have heard much and credit little.



Composed from the Book of Kells.



## CHAPTER XII.

THE KING RECEIVES THE VOLUNTEERS—IRELAND IS HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS—CALL FOR A NATIONAL CONVENTION.

That unparalleled army, the Irish Volunteers, had now ascended to the zenith of their character and prosperity. They had liberated their country from a thralldom of seven centuries; their numbers, their attitude, and respectability, had won their independence from a more powerful nation without bloodshed. The King received at his court and his levies, with apparent cordiality, Volunteer Officers and soldiers who, without his authority, formed an army unconnected with his Crown and independent of his Government; they acted without pay and submitted to discipline without coercion.

The regular forces paid them military honors; the Parliament repeatedly thanked them for supporting a constitution upon which their establishment had undoubtedly encroached. They were adored by the people, dreaded by the Minister, honored by the King and celebrated through Europe. They had raised their country from slavery and they supported their Monarch against his enemies. They were loyal but determined to be free; and if their Parliament had been honest, Ireland would have kept her rank and the nation preserved its tranquillity. The rise and progress of that institution has been already traced; its decline and fall must now be recorded.

At this period Ireland appeared to have nothing to desire but capital and industry. She was free, she was independent, populous, powerful and patriotic; her debt did not exceed her means of payment; but of trading capital she had insufficient means, and her industry was cramped by the narrowness of her resources. All the materials and elements of industry were within her own realm and the freedom of trade she had acquired now promised a stimulus to her commerce which she had never before experienced. The people were united; Catholic and Protestant were on the most cordial terms; the voice of patriotism had exorcised the spirit of discord, the Catholic



for the moment forgot his chains and the Protestant recollected his ascendancy; peace, order and security extended over the whole island; no army was required to defend the coasts, no police was wanted to preserve tranquillity, neither foreign nor domestic enemies could succeed against a prospering and united people.

Had the ardent nature of Ireland been then tempered by calm and preserving judgment, had ordinary foresight controlled or guided her zeal, and had rational *scepticism* moderated her enthusiasm, one short session of her own Parliament might have entrenched her independence and established her constitution, beyond the power or the influence of all her enemies.

Untoward destiny, however, had decreed that unfortunate and ever mal-governed island to fall into the error by which individuals so often meet their ruin. Having obtained successes beyond their expectation, a mist obscures their vision; they know not where to stop, they rush blindly to the dangers that surround them and lose by indiscretion what they had achieved by fortitude.

It was justly feared that the too sensitive, credulous and enthusiastic Irish, in a fallacious paroxysm of gratitude, might raise the draw-bridge of their fortress for the admission of their enemies, and, amidst the dissensions of the most able and honest of their warders, those who sought their overthrow might again penetrate into her citadel.

The unfortunate differences of sentiments between Mr. Flood and Mr. Grattan, by enfeebling the authority of both, had diminished the security of the nation. Mr. Flood's diffidence of government was most congenial to the prospective interests of a people long enslaved. The energy of patriots had achieved, but it required the wisdom of statesmen to secure their newly-acquired constitution. Both, however, united in opinion as to the necessity as to the free and independent Parliament to protect that constitution; but no unanimity existed between them or throughout the country, as to the details of that measure.

By these unfortunate collisions, courtiers obtained breathing time, and the Minister acquired hope. The hundred eyes of the British Argus were keen to discover the failings and frailties of the Irish patriots; nor did they watch long in vain; for a measure, which forms one of the most remarkable inci-

dents of Irish history, soon gave the English Government an opportunity of resuming its operations against that devoted country.

The line of reasoning already described as to the state of the Parliament, and the necessity for its reform, made a deep and general impression, and was indefatigably circulated throughout the whole nation. Discontent quickly sprang up amongst the people, and their meetings increased. At length delegates from several Volunteer Regiments again assembled at Dungannon to consider the expediency and means of an immediate reform of Parliament. Hence originated one of the most extraordinary scenes in the annals of any country.

Mr. Flood was now considered the most able leader of the Irish patriots. Those who supported his opinion still pertinaciously contended that the measures already conceded were not, in themselves, guaranteed for the constitution which had been acquired, or in any respect sufficient for the preservation of independence; that confidence in the existing state of her Parliament would lull the nation into a fatal slumber, from which she might be awakened only by a new assault upon her freedom; and that no arrangement, without an explicit, formal and unequivocal recantation by England of her original usurpations ought to have been accepted. They urged that such an avowal would certainly have been obtained, if the Parliament had not been corrupted or deceived. They contended that if England should refuse such a declaration that in itself would be positive proof of her general insincerity; and that if she haughtily persisted in retaining the theory of her usurpation after the practice of it had been relinquished it was evident she would watch the first favorable moment to impose still stronger chains than those which she had loosened.

This strong language had already been freely used to rouse the friends of Ireland to a conviction of the versatility which her Representatives had given such practical proofs of. It was most assiduously disseminated, and not without foundation, that the Irish Parliament, in its recent proceedings, had clearly evinced more talent than prudence, and less wisdom than declamation; that whilst patriots were debating in the House, the Secretary was negotiating in the corridor; and therefore it was necessary to the public safety to strangle corruption in its cradle, and give the people a due confidence in the integrity of their Representatives.

It was considered by many men of influence and fortune that a reform of the Commons House of Parliament was attainable and should be then attained. The national arrangements daily appeared more imperfect, for they had not been conducted with the sound principles of cautious statesmen, nor had satisfactory guarantees been established for their future security. As Parliament was then returned, no well-founded confidence could be placed in its *permanent* protection; and it was most judiciously stated by Mr. Flood, *that the speech of a puzzled Minister, put into the mouth of an embarrassed Monarch*, was at that moment the only security for the continuance of Ireland as an independent nation; and such independence might rest solely upon a single word of two syllables, on which every future Minister might found fallacious reasoning, and place his own equivocal construction. This was, in truth, prophetic.

It was also more than insinuated, by men of clear and dispassionate judgment, that the struggles in Parliament were becoming rather for the supremacy of men and party than for the preservation of the Constitution, that they were blind, rancorous, and ill-timed individual contests, dangerous to the state and irritating to the people. They argued that the piercing eye of the British Minister would not fail to watch for the moment when, the Irish being enfeebled by their dissensions, he might destroy that independence which the architects of 1782 had attempted to establish, without guarding against the insecurity of the foundation. So far these arguments were true, but men stopped not here. It was suggested that a requisition to the Parliament to reform itself, urged by the people in their civil capacities only, might not have sufficient weight to command attention. If, however, 300 delegates were chosen by Volunteer regiments, from men of fortune, influence and character, it would prove to the Parliament that a reform was required by those who had a right to require it, and could enforce it. They might send the heads of a Bill to Parliament through the hands of their own members; such a mode of presentation could create no cavil, and, above all, the very same men who would deliberate as volunteer delegates and prepare such a bill would be, in a great measure, those who, in their civil capacities, composed the several grand juries of the nation, many of them being members of the Legislature. The measure was almost unanimously determined upon.

Three hundred delegates were now chosen by different corps, and the 10th of November (1783) was proclaimed for the first sitting of the Grand National Convention of Ireland, within the precincts of the two Houses of Parliament, the members of which were at the same time exercising their legislative functions. Never was any country placed in a more extraordinary or critical condition.

This state of affairs in Ireland was then seriously felt by the English Cabinet; it became alarmed. Ireland now stood in a high situation. No longer (in the language of Mr. Gibbon) a remote and obscure island, she formed a new feature on the face of Europe, and might assert her rank amongst the second order of European nations. In constitution and in laws, municipal and international, she was fundamentally the same as England, her legislature was, in theory, altogether independent. The individuality of their joint Monarch constituted the indefeasible basis of their federative connection; but their respective Parliaments alone could make laws to bind their respective people, to regulate their own commerce, and to pay their own armies. Ireland had wisely and magnanimously recorded her loyalty, and proclaimed her determination, that "*whilst she shared the liberty, she would share the fate of the British nation*"; but the compact was *reciprocal*, and she had bound herself *no further*.

England could not with apathy regard a military convention, meeting and operating on political subjects, in the centre of the Irish metropolis.

The attention of England was by the adoption of these extraordinary proceedings naturally roused to a more detailed review of the statistical circumstances of Ireland. By the acquisition of a free commerce and of unshackled manufactures, the revenue and resources of Ireland consequently became susceptible of extraordinary improvement, and might soon have equaled those of many continental nations and solely at her own disposal and approbation.

In the capability of military power also she had few rivals; at that period she contained (and continues to contain) more fighting men, or men who *love fighting*, and who might be collected in a week, than any other state in Europe. The powerful and elevated position she was then about to occupy, and the unprecedented steps by which she had mounted to that eminence, could not be regarded without strong feelings of solicitude by the sister country.



The example of Ireland had afforded a grave and instructive lesson to an oppressed and vassal people, and a wholesome lecture to gripping and monopolizing governments. Of all the extraordinary circumstances which the state of Ireland then displayed, none was beheld at that critical period with such mingled wonder and alarm by England as the rapid progress of the Volunteer associations. And the bold step of a delegated convention, the increasing numbers, discipline and energy of that military institution had no precedent, nor in the changed state of Europe can the phenomenon ever appear in any country.

The Volunteers, now actually *armed and disciplined*, and whose delegates were now to be assembled, were said to exceed 150,000 organized men. But whatever the force then was, the Volunteer recruits, if called on, would have comprised the male inhabitants of nearly the whole island, including every rank, religion and occupation.

Such a force, though self-levied, self-officered and utterly independent of any control or subjection, save to their own chosen chiefs, still remained in perfect harmony amongst themselves, in entire obedience to the municipal laws of the country, holding the most friendly and intimate intercourse with the regular forces, and by their activity and local knowledge, preserving that country in a state of general and unprecedented tranquillity.

Thus extraordinary military body, equally ready to shed their blood in opposing a foreign enemy, supporting their own liberties, or defending those of England, combining the moral and physical powers, and nearly the entire wealth of an immense population, nothing could have resisted; and whatever ground of alarm the British Government might have then felt, had ministers been mad enough at that period to attempt its direct or compulsory suppression, instead of its attachment to the sister country, the result would inevitably have been a prompt separation of the two islands.

Ireland was in this state at the first meeting of the National Convention, and the Parliament assembled about the same time. The Volunteer elections were quickly ended without tumult or opposition, and their 300 delegates, each escorted by a detachment of Volunteers from their respective counties, entered the metropolis and were universally received with a respect and cordiality impossible to be depicted; yet



all was harmony and peace. Many men of large fortune, many of great talent and many members of the Lords and Commons had been elected delegates *by the Volunteers*, and took upon themselves the double functions of Parliament and of the Convention.

The Royal Exchange of Dublin was first selected for the meeting of the Volunteer delegates. Whoever has seen the metropolis of Ireland must admire the external architecture of that building; but it was found inadequate to the accommodation of a very large deliberative assembly. It was therefore determined that the Rotunda (being then the finest room in Ireland) was best adapted for the meeting of the National Convention. This was and continues to be the great assembly-room of Dublin. It consists of a circular saloon of very large dimensions, connected with numerous and very spacious chambers, and terminates Sackville street, the finest of the Irish metropolis. It is surmounted by a dome, exceeding in diameter the Irish House of Commons, and was perfectly adapted to the accommodation of a popular assembly.

This saloon and the connected chambers had been fitted up for the important purpose to which they were to be appropriated. But little did they conceive that what they then considered as the proudest day their nation ever had seen, only preceded a little time her national dissolution, and even prepared the grave in which her new-gained independence was to be inhumated. Every measure, however, had been previously taken to prepare that splendid chamber for this unparalleled assembly and to receive the delegates and their escorts with every possible mark of respect and dignity. Volunteer grenadiers were ordered to attend on the convention as a guard of honor during their sittings, and to mount an officer's guard at the house of the President; whilst Volunteer dragoons patrolled during the sittings, in the utmost tranquillity, throughout the entire city. The detachments of country corps who had escorted their delegates, having a great emulation as to their appearance and equipments on this grand occasion, had new dresses and accoutrements, and it was agreeable to see the noble hunters on which a great proportion of the cavalry was mounted. The horse had entered Dublin in small detachments, from exceedingly numerous corps, and when occasionally formed into line the great variety of their dresses, ensigns and equipments presented a splendid but very striking and singular appearance.

The citizens of Dublin excelled in their hospitality, they appeared in crowds everywhere, forcing their invitations on the country Volunteers, every soldier had numerous billets pressed into his hand, every householder who could afford it vied with entertaining his guests with zeal and cordiality. Everything was secure and tranquil, but when it was considered that 300 members had virtually proclaimed a concurrent Parliament, under the title of a National Convention and were about to lead a splendid procession through the body of the city, to hold its sittings within view of the House of Legislature, the affairs of Ireland seemed drawing fast to some decisive catastrophe. But it was also considered that the Convention was an assembly of men of rank, of fortune and of talent. The Convention, therefore, possessed an importance and a consistence that seemed to render some momentous consequence absolutely inevitable; the crisis did arrive, but it was unfortunate; Ireland tottered, retrograded and has fallen.

The firing of twenty-one cannon announced the first movement of the delegates from the Royal Exchange to the Rotunda, a troop of the Rathdown cavalry, commanded by Colonel Edwards, of Old Court, County of Wicklow, commenced the procession, the Liberty Brigade of Artillery, commanded by Napper Tandy, with a band, succeeded. A company of the Barristers' grenadiers, headed by Colonel Pedder, with a national standard for Ireland, borne by a captain of grenadiers and surrounded by a company of the finest men of the regiment, came after, their muskets slung and bright battle-axes borne on their shoulders. A battalion of infantry, with a band, followed, and then the delegates, two by two, with side-arms, carrying banners with mottoes and in their respective uniforms; broad green ribands were worn across their shoulders. Another band followed playing a special air adopted by the Volunteers for marching and review. The champions of the different regiments in their cassocks, marched each with his respective corps, giving solemnity to the procession, and as if invoking the blessing of Heaven on their efforts, which had a wonderful effect on the surrounding multitude. Several standards and colors were borne by the different corps of horse and foot, and another brigade of artillery, commanded by Counsellor Calbeck, with labels on the cannon's mouths, was escorted by the Barristers' corps in scarlet

and gold (the full dress uniform of the King's guards); the motto on their buttons being "*Vox populi suprema lex est.*"—"The voice of the people is the supreme law."

The procession itself was interesting, but the surrounding scene was still more effecting. Their line of march from the Exchange to the Rotunda was through the most spacious streets and quays of the city, open on both sides to the river, and capable of containing a vastly larger assemblage of people than any part of the metropolis of England. An immense body of spectators, crowding every window and housetop, would be but an ordinary occurrence, and might be seen and described without novelty or interest, but, on this occasion, every countenance spoke zeal, every eye expressed solicitude, and every action proclaimed triumph; green ribands and handkerchiefs were waved from every window by the enthusiasm of its fair occupants; crowds seemed to move on the housetops, ribands were flung upon the delegates as they passed; yet it was a loud and boisterous, but a firm enthusiasm. It was not the effervescence of a heated crowd, it was not the fiery ebullition of a glowing people, it was not sedition, it was liberty that inspired them, the heart bounded though the tongue was motionless, those who did not see or who do not recollect that splendid day, must have the mortification of reflecting that (under all its circumstances) no man did before, and no man ever will "behold its like again."

The entrance of the delegates into the Rotunda was more than interesting—it was awful. Each doffed his helmet or his hat, as if he felt the influence of that sacred place where he was about to sacrifice at the shrine of Freedom. Every man knew he was, in some respects, overstepping the boundaries of the Constitution, but he considered that his trespass was for the purpose only of adding security to that Constitution which he seemed to transgress.

Such a state of things never existed in any other country, consistent with perfect tranquillity. Ireland, however, proved on that occasion her superior loyalty and gave the retort courteous to all her calumniators. It was a matter of fact that the independence of Ireland had been achieved, that it had been proclaimed in Ireland and in England, that it had been solemnly ratified and confirmed forever by his Majesty from his throne, as monarch of both countries. That compact was therefore firm, because it was federal and final, and the dele-

gates sought what their own Parliament alone was competent to discuss, and over which England had no control. A partial form of the representation was a measure which the British minister himself had the duplicity of proposing in England, yet of undermining in the sister country, even in the face of his own renunciation of all innovation and acknowledgment of the former usurpation.

These would at any other time have been subjects for deliberate consideration, but it was too late to reflect, the die was thrown and as if everything conspired to increase the peculiarities of the scene, even the site of the Rotunda, where the Convention assembled, exactly terminated the street and front of the river, on the other side of which, in a direct line, was seen the magnificent dome of the Commons House of Parliament, where 300 members returned as representatives of the Irish people, according to the practice of the constitution, were also deliberating.

Those localities excited in every rational mind something like a dread of possible collision, it was also a grave and curious consideration that the avowed object of the Volunteer delegation was, in fact, to degrade the character of the Parliamentary delegates and, under the name of reform, convict them of corruption.

It was impossible not to perceive that both were placed in a situation which must necessarily terminate in the humiliation of one of them.

It was also remarkable that the Volunteers, who had thus sent their delegates to reform the Commons House of Parliament, had been themselves solemnly thanked the preceding session for their support to the Constitution by the very same House of Commons which they now determined to reorganize and reform.

It is impossible not to contrast this national convention of Ireland with the democratic assemblies which, in later days overwhelmed so many thrones and countries. With what pride must an Irishman call to his recollection the concentration of rank and fortune, and patriotism and royalty, which composed that convention of the Irish people! With what pride must the few survivors remember the 300 Irish nobles and gentlemen, assembling peaceably and loyally to demand a reform, an object of all others the nearest to their hearts, and the most necessary to their independence!



Yet the collection of that assembly must also cast a dark shade over the History of Ireland, by transferring a reflection on its proud birth to its humble termination.

A delineation of those scenes may appear to modern readers an exaggerated episode. That generation which beheld or acted in those days, is drawing fast to a close; and whilst a few contemporaries exist it would be unpardonable to leave the scenes altogether to future historians, who convey but an imperfect recital of actions they had never seen, and frigid ideas of feelings they had never experienced. The results of that extraordinary measure may enable posterity to do some justice to calumniated Ireland, where loyalty appears to have wonderfully retained its influence over a powerful, proud and patriotic assembly, and over an armed and irresistible population, under circumstances the most dangerous and irritating that had ever terminated with tranquillity in any nation.

The Artillery had scarcely announced the entry of the delegates into the Rotunda when that silent respect which had pervaded the entire population during the procession yielded to more lively feelings, no longer could the people restrain their joy. At first, a low murmur seemed to proceed from different quarters, which soon increasing in its fervor, at length burst into a universal cheer of triumph, like distant thunder, gradually rolling on, till one great and continued peal burst upon the senses, the loud and incessant cheering of the people soon reverberated from street to street, contributing the whole powers of acclamation to glorify an assembly which they vainly conceived must be omnipotent; it was an acclamation, long, sincere and unanimous, and occasionally died away, only to be renewed with redoubled energy. The vivid interest excited by this extraordinary and affecting scene can never be conceived, save by those who were present, and participated in its feelings, nor can time or age obliterate it from the memory.

It is not unworthy of remark that a wonderful proportion of female voices was distinguishable amidst these plaudits. A general illumination took place throughout the city, bands of music were heard everywhere and never did a day and night of rejoicing so truly express the unsophisticated gratification of an entire population. The government was astounded, the Privy Council had sat, but were far from unanimous, and had separated without decision. The old courtiers



called the scene frantic, but it was not the frenzy of a mob, it was the triumph of a nation, incomprehensible to the vulgar meetings of another country.

The scene within was still more novel and impressive. The varied uniforms of the delegates had a very singular appearance; sent from different regiments, no two of them were dressed or armed alike; cavalry, infantry, grenadiers, artillery, generals, colonels, sergeants, privates; in fine, all possible varieties of military dress and rank were collected in one general body, destined to act solely in a civil capacity.

The cheers, the cannon, the music, the musketry, combined to prevent any procedure that day, save that of the members giving in their delegation and nominating some officers to act during the session.



Composed from the Book of Kells.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONVENTION—BRILLIANT SCENES.

Previous to the meeting of the delegates, the Bishop of Derry had determined to convince the Irish people, that he was no lukewarm professor of adherence to their interests; his character is confirmed by every act of his life when in Ireland. He took his seat amongst the Irish delegates, at the Rotunda, with the greatest splendor, and, to prove that he preferred the claims of the Irish Volunteers to both his English rank as Earl of Bristol and his Irish rank as a spiritual noble, he entered Dublin in royal state, drew up his equipage at the entrance to the House of Lords, as if he halted to teach the Peers their duty to their country, and then moved forward to take his seat at the Rotunda, as an Irish delegate in the National Convention. Such a circumstance can be scarcely credited in England; but had not Lord Charlemont's temporizing neutralized his spirit, it is probable that the Convention might have succeeded in its objects. It is not, therefore, wonderful, that a British Peer, an Englishman, and, above all, a Bishop, taking so decided a part in the cause of Ireland, should gain a popularity that few before him ever had so fully, or, perhaps, more justly, experienced. He certainly was sincere; his proceedings on this occasion were extraordinary, and not unworthy of a special notice

The Lords had taken their seats in the House of Peers when the Bishop of Derry began his procession to take his seat in the Convention. He had several carriages in his suite, and sat in an open landau, drawn by six beautiful horses, caparisoned with purple ribands. He was dressed in purple, his horses, equipages, and servants being in the most splendid trappings and liveries. He had brought to Dublin, as his escort, a troop of light cavalry, raised by his unfortunate and guilty nephew, George Robert Fitzgerald; they were splendidly dressed and accoutred, and were mounted on the finest chargers that the Bishop or their commander could procure. A part of these dragoons led the procession, another closed it, and some rode on each side of his Lord-

ship's carriage. Trumpets announced his approach, and detachments from several Volunteer corps of Dublin joined his Lordship's cavalcade. He never ceased making dignified obeisances to the multitude, his salutations were enthusiastically returned on every side, "Long live the Bishop" was heard from every window; yet all was peace and harmony, and never did there appear so extraordinary a procession within the realm of Ireland.

This cavalcade marched slowly through the different streets, till it arrived at the portico of the House of Lords, which adjoined that of the Commons. A short halt was then made, the trumpets sounded, the sudden and unexpected clangor of which echoed throughout the long corridors. Both Houses had just finished prayers, and were proceeding to business, and, totally unconscious of the cause, several members rushed to the entrance. The Bishop saluted all with royal dignity, the Volunteers presented arms, and the bands played the Volunteer's march. Of a sudden another clangor of trumpets was heard, the astonished Lords and Commons, unable to divine what was to ensue, or the reason of the extraordinary appearance of the Bishop, retired to their respective chambers and with great solicitude awaited the result.

The Bishop, however, had done what he intended, he had astonished both Houses, and had proved to them his principles and his determination, amidst the shouts and cheers of thousands, he proceeded to the Rotunda, where, in point of dignity and importance, he certainly appeared to surpass the whole of his brother delegates. He entered the chamber in the greatest form, presented his credentials, took his seat, conversed a few moments with all the ceremony of a temporal prince, and then, with the excess of that dignified courtesy of which he was a perfect master, he retired as he had entered, and drove away in the same majestic style, and amidst reiterated applauses, to his house, where the Volunteers had previously mounted a guard of honor. He entertained a great number of persons of rank at a magnificent dinner, and the ensuing day began his course amongst the delegates, as an ordinary man of business.

The personal appearance of the Bishop was extremely prepossessing; rather under the middle size, he was peculiarly well made, his countenance fair, handsome, and intelligent,

but rather expressive of a rapidity of thought than of the deliberation of judgment; his hair, receding from his forehead, gave a peculiar trait of respectability to his appearance.

His manner appeared zealous and earnest, and rather more quick than is consistent with perfect dignity; but he seemed to be particularly well bred and courteous; and altogether he could not be viewed without an impression that he was a person of talent and of eminence.

He appeared always dressed with peculiar care and neatness; in general, entirely in purple, and he wore diamond knee and shoe buckles. But what I most observed in his dress was, that he wore white gloves, with gold fringe round the wrists, and large gold tassels hanging from them.

The author was then too young, and too unimportant, to have the honor of any personal acquaintance with that distinguished prelate; but the singularity of his habits, his patriotic conduct, popular character, and impressive appearance, excited a satisfaction in beholding him, and impressed him strongly on my recollection.

The Bishop, in devoting himself to the service of the Irish people, could have no personal object but popularity. He could be no greater in title; he was rich, and in health, vigor, and spirits; his learning was rare, his talents very considerable—in all respects he was an able man. From the moment he became an Irish Bishop he adopted Ireland, built an immense palace in a remote and singular situation, and did numerous acts which nobody could account for. He had many of those qualities in an eminent degree, which our more ancient histories have attributed to the proudest churchmen; but they were in him so blended with liberality, so tempered by enlightened principles, that they excited a very different mode of conduct from his episcopal predecessors. However, his ambition for popularity obviously knew no bounds, and his efforts to gain that popularity found no limits. His great failing was a portion of natural versatility, which frequently enfeebled the confidence of his adherents. It was supposed that the gentle, lambient flame of Charlemont would soon be quenched in the rolling, rapid torrent of the Bishop's popularity, and that the epigrammatic eloquence of Mr. Grattan, cramped or overpowered by the influence of his splendor, would probably be withdrawn from the scene of action. The

Bishop soon adopted his course; he paid his whole attention to Mr. Flood. In this he was right. It is not too much to say that Mr. Flood was, at least, the best educated and deepest statesman, and the most able partisan, in the Irish Senate.

Whilst these extraordinary and brilliant scenes were proceeding in Ireland, the embarrassment of the British Ministers must necessarily be on the increase, if possible. They well knew that if the Convention succeeded in reforming the Commons House of Parliament, the British Government would lose the use of the only instrument through which they ever could hope to regain their ascendancy; and with this view, and at this critical period, the plot was suggested and the conspiracy formed to replace Ireland within the trammels of the sister country whenever a feasible opportunity should offer. The sequence of Irish events leaves no doubt of the truth of his observation.

These collisions were, to England, a golden opportunity; plans against the Volunteer Associations were deeply laid, and with considerable prospect of eventually succeeding, first by working upon the courtly moderation and courteous feebleness of the short-sighted Charlemont, and credulity of Grattan, to dismiss the Convention, and thereby divide and dispirit the Volunteers. And, next, by corrupting Parliament and seducing the Irish gentlemen, under pretense of upholding the British Constitution, to recapture the Irish independence. Whoever reads the political history of those realms from 1782 to 1800, cannot doubt that this object, from that period to the completion of the legislative Union, was never lost sight of.

The British Minister had also reasons nearer home for determining to undermine the reforming spirit of the Irish Volunteers. He knew that if a reform of Parliament were effected in Ireland, though the same reasons did not exist, yet the same measure could not be long withheld from the English nation; and as the Parliament was at that era supposed to be ruled absolutely by the influence of the Crown, the control of the Minister would receive a vital blow which it never could recover.

The commercial system of England, too, whilst without external rivalry, had no necessity for a special protection. But now she had a rival in the free trade of Ireland, a subject which soon after came under full discussion. The



jealousy of England was proved by her commercial propositions, and the Irish Parliament had yet sufficient honesty to resist that inroad.

But as a body that had labored long and much, a lassitude and relaxation were obviously commencing in the Irish Senate, how long that spirit, which had acquired their rights, might retain its vigor to protect them, depended on the purity of the representatives, and this was the true reason for considering a reform imperative in Ireland.

Whilst, therefore, the subject of Reform is under discussion, it may be proper to see how far the then existing state of Ireland substantially required that measure, or warranted that conclusion. She was to commence as a trading country, and a situation on the map of the world seemed to combine many defects and many advantages. She appears partially secluded from that general intercourse which other states of Europe enjoy from their localities. England, on the east, intervenes between her and the British Channel and German Ocean; Scotland intercepts the Northern Seas; and though the most western point of Europe, and of course well situated for the western commerce, the enterprise and great capital, or jealousy, of England, could have excluded her at pleasure, if unprotected by her own Parliament, from any proportional participation in the colonial trade. On a view of the whole, her position might have entitled her to have become a considerable emporium, but jealousy is natural to commercial nations, and Ireland would probably have possessed the same lust for monopoly had she been circumstanced as Great Britain. But the non-importation resolutions of Ireland had alarmed Great Britain, and proved to her to what a zeal of retaliation the Irish people might be urged by any future measures of injustice.

The situation of Ireland places her comparatively out of the pale of busy Europe, by the absence of that political interest which the powers of Europe take in the commerce of other and inferior countries. This was a deprivation which nothing could ever remedy or counteract, but a local legislature, constantly resident, and constantly alive to the foreign and domestic interests of their country.

These were some of the causes which rendered a pure and independent Parliament more necessary to Ireland than to her sister country. Ireland never had been a nation of exten-

sive commerce, yet even the narrow channels of her trade were ever contracted by the jealousies and monopoly of England; and this in public opinion rendered a pure Parliament indispensable, as the only ample security against such interference.

To constitute an Irish Parliament, therefore, as much as possible free from every tinge of English commercial or political influence, was plausibly considered essential to the security of the former country. The necessity, in point of facts, can only be judged of by this view of the external state of Ireland at the crisis, when a military convention to discuss Reform surprised every nation of Europe, that would condescend or take the trouble to think about an island so secluded.

The public characters of the Bishop of Derry and his more moderate rival were so extremely dissimilar, and their composition so totally repugnant, that any amalgamation of sentiment was utterly impossible. A cautious attachment to regularity and order, a sincere love for the people, a polished, courtly respect for the aristocracy, with a degree of popular ambition and a proportion of individual vanity, were the governing principles of Lord Charlemont during the whole of his political conduct. But, unfortunately, these were accompanied by a strong taint of that religious intolerance which has since proved the interruption of Irish tranquillity.

No man in Ireland could do the honors of a review better; and though his personal courage was undoubted, no man in Ireland was likely to do the duties of a battle worse than Lord Charlemont. He guessed the extent of his own powers, and sedulously avoided any situation to which they might prove inadequate. If the people had not respected his virtues, they would not have submitted to his weakness; and if he had not loved the people, he would not have sacrificed his tranquillity to command them. He was an excellent *unuse*, tender of the constitution, but dreading every effective remedy prescribed for its disorders.

Lord Charlemont saw clearly that the Presidency of the National Convention was of vital consequence to the country, and the master-key of his own importance. He had his little as well as his great feelings, and both were set into action by this dilemma. He knew full well that if the bold and enterprising Prelate were at the head of that Convention, he would lose all weight with the Government, and all influence with

the people. The measure was altogether too strong for the character of Lord Charlemont; he knew he would be incapable of governing that body if it once got into any leading-strings but his own, and it was obvious that if his Lordship should get one step beyond his depth he never could regain his position. His friends, therefore, anticipated every means to ensure his nomination to the Presidency, and the Bishop of Derry, before he was aware that there would be any effectual opposition to himself, found Lord Charlemont actually placed in that situation where he might restrain, if not counteract, the ultra energies of the reforming party. This was the very step the Government desired; Earl Charlemont might be managed, but the Bishop of Derry would have been intractable. Lord Charlemont involuntarily became the tool of Government, whilst he fancied he was laboring in the service of the people. From this moment the neutralizing system by which its President wished to conduct that assembly became obvious. Everybody might foresee that not only the Convention, but perhaps the Volunteer Associations were likely to droop.

Many sensible men had apprehended that the Bishop's politics might be too strong; the very act of his attaching himself to Ireland proved at once their vigor and eccentricity; and hence the Presidency of the Convention, in every point of view, became a measure of extreme importance.

A few of the members of the House of Commons had declined their election to the Convention, but some of the ablest and most respectable members performed their duties alternately in both assemblies. The Lord Lieutenant and his Privy Council at the same time held their sittings at the Castle, exactly midway between the two Parliaments; they received alternate reports from each, and undecided whether the strong or the passive system were least, or rather most, fraught with danger, they at length wisely adopted their accustomed course, and determined to take advantage of the chances of division, and of the moderation, ductility, and pride of Lord Charlemont.

It was artfully insinuated to Lord Charlemont, by the friends of the Government, that the peace of the country was considered to be in his hands, that he had accepted a situation of the most responsible nature, and that if he did not possess sufficient influence to curb the Convention, he ought at once

to resign the trust, and thereby give the Parliament a ground of requiring the immediate dissolution of its constitutional rival.

Lord Charlemont found himself in a situation of great embarrassment. If he held the Presidency he was responsible for its proceedings; if he resigned it, he would still be responsible for having countenanced the organization of the assembly; the Bishop would succeed him in his chair, and he would still be considered the inceptive promoter of whatever might be adopted by his successor. Lord Charlemont's pride resisted his resignation. He was too high to be commanded, he was too feeble to control, and he found himself in a state of great perplexity. After much deliberation, he adopted the suggestions of the countiers and was led blindfolded to that deceptive course which might answer his tranquil objects for the moment, but was beneath his character, and must eventually have extinguished all the popular influence of the Volunteers and have destroyed that of the country. In fine, he lost himself; he sacrificed his country, and determined on a line of proceeding entirely unworthy of his former conduct; if he could not govern, he resolved to temporize, divide, neutralize, and dissolve the assembly.

This fatal system was eventually successful, and his Lordship effected the dissolution of that body whose confidence had raised him to so glorious an eminence, by which the British Government now foresaw the possibility of recapturing Irish independence. Lord Charlemont had been seized with a nervous dread of that very institution he had originally been so active in creating; and entirely, though unconsciously, surrendered himself to the darling objects of a deep and treacherous administration.

And here let it be remarked, that the independence of Ireland, which certainly was first achieved by the exertions of the Whigs, was now left unguarded, and afterwards destroyed by the corrupt tergiversation of many members of that same party. The inconsistent conduct of some of the Whigs, and their Place Bill in 1794, were the proximate means through which the Union was ultimately effected.

The proceedings of the Convention were carried on for some time with the utmost regularity. The rules and orders and customs of Parliament were adopted, and the meetings were held and continued without any material interruption.



But when such an assembly had been delegated for the purpose of requiring the Parliament to purify itself, and remodel its constitution, it could not be expected that every member could possess similar views or similar feelings, or perhaps observe the most uninterrupted order and discipline in discussions. But the decorum and regularity of the Convention may be best exemplified by observing that there was not any meeting or discussion of the National Convention of Ireland, from its first to its last meeting, more confused or boisterous than what has very frequently been witnessed in the Commons House of the Imperial Parliament.

A strong opposition soon arose to the imbecile system of Lord Charlemont. Superior public characters at length assumed their stations, and effectively overwhelmed that childish affectation of delicacy so utterly incompatible with the circumstances of the times and the spirit of the patriots. Yet, unfortunately, Lord Charlemont was elected and took the chair as President.

The Bishop, disappointed of the chair, lost no time in rendering it a seat of thorns. He took to his council the man of all others best adapted to give weight and dignity to the measure of Parliamentary reform. Lord Charlemont supported reform most sincerely. Mr. Grattan was also a sincere and honest friend to a purification of Parliament; but his favorite scheme, as he said, to begin with, was an internal reform. He partially accomplished that object of the Place Bill, whilst by one of its clauses he most certainly lost both the Parliament and the Constitution.

The Bishop and Mr. Flood soon gained a full ascendancy in the Convention, and many men of the very first rank, fortune, and influence took part in its deliberations. Numerous plans were proposed, and reform, of all others the most difficult of political measures, was sought to be too promptly decided in a heated and impatient assembly.

By the imprudence of both parties the Convention and the Parliament were driven into a direct collision. After much deliberation, a plan of reform, framed by Mr. Flood and approved by the Convention, was directed by them to be presented to Parliament forthwith, and the sittings of the Convention were made permanent till the Parliament had decided the question. Mr. Flood obeyed his instructions, and moved for leave to bring in the Bill to reform the Parliament.



The Government felt that a collision of the two assemblies was unavoidable. The crisis, however, afforded no opportunity for mature consideration, and it was not long before the danger of so hasty a proceeding was fatally experienced. Government had yielded to the Volunteers when it could not resist them; but it was not probable that the Parliament would quietly capitulate to the Convention; whilst the triumph of the Parliament implied not only the destruction of the Convention but of the Volunteers.

The measure of reform, patriotic and noble, blinded the nation to every consideration but its attainment, actual and prompt; yet so many persons of character, fortune, and influence were in both assemblies that a discreet and prudent deliberation might possibly have devised means of averting so great a crisis.

The Government resolved to risk a direct assault upon the Volunteers, by refusing leave to bring in Mr. Flood's Bill, because it had originated from *their* deliberations. Strong language was used, but with some precaution, even by Mr. Yelverton, who had been a zealous Volunteer, but was now the Attorney General. His eloquence was splendid, but the bold, restless, arrogant spirit of Fitzgibbon, ever prone to offend, to irritate, and to pervert, in a speech replete with the most unnecessary invective, unwarrantable fury and abuse, assailed the Convention, the Volunteers, and the Bill with every epithet and allusion that could bring the Government and the Volunteers into a state of direct hostility. Had this effort been crowned with success, British connection would probably not have been of three months' duration.

The House felt the danger of his conduct, and he was not supported in his philippics. Mr. Curran called Mr. Fitzgibbon a maniac and an incendiary; Mr. D. Daley termed Mr. Flood a demagogue. The debate became quite unprecedented in point of violence and party recrimination, but the good sense of some members endeavored to moderate the partisans. The Bill, after a dreadful uproar, was rejected by 158 to 49; 138 of the majority were placemen, and the very *persons on whom the reform was intended to operate*. It is very remarkable that it was 138 placemen that rejected the Reform Bill in 1783, and that it was the same number of placemen who carried the Union Bill in 1800, which, if the reform had succeeded, never could have been passed.

Upon this very decision ultimately depended the existence of Irish independence. The Volunteers were insulted, their Bill was rejected without a hearing, their intentions were calumniated, even their name was reprobated; their services were forgotten, and that very corruption which they sought to reform thus had its full revenge.

Mr. Connolly—that weak, obstinate and most inconsistent of the Irish Whigs, whom family and fortune alone could have raised from obscurity—endeavored to give a finishing blow to that virtuous association which, in the same place, he had so often eulogized. He now explicitly denounced the Volunteers as enemies to that Constitution which they had obtained for their country, and which he afterwards surrendered to the Ministers, against whose measures he had arrayed himself on every important occasion.

This too great confidence of the Volunteers, in the success of their measures, had thus led them too rapidly into a proceeding that required the most deliberate consideration. The refusal of Parliament to receive their Bill created a sensation which, for a moment, left the peace of Ireland on the very brink of the precipice. Lord Charlemont mistook his *fears* for his *prudence*, the Volunteers mistook their resentment for their patriotism, both were exposed to extremity, and some decisive crisis appeared absolutely inevitable. That great and patriotic army which had the year before received the unanimous thanks of the Parliament were, by the motion of a Whig, nearly denounced as rebels and little less than a declaration of war against them was voted, even without a division in the Parliament.

By this fatal dilemma, resistance or dissolution alone remained to the Convention. The most intelligent of that body determined that a day or two should be taken to reflect on the best course of proceeding. But Lord Charlemont dreaded the consequence of discussion and decided rather to betray his trust than hazard insurrection, and to adopt the safer step of dissolving the Convention.

It is not easy to describe the uneasiness and deep solicitude of the Convention pending that debate. Reporters were perpetually passing and repassing between the two assemblies; the impatience of the Volunteers was rising into a storm; Earl Charlemont, overwhelmed by his apprehension, saw no course but to induce them to adjourn; they, however,

waited till long after midnight, in a state between anger and anxiety. Lord Charlemont did not oppose, but he duped them. He received a note from the House of Commons which he said left no hopes of a speedy decision, and he had the address and influence to induce the Convention to adjourn till Monday morning at the usual hour, then to decide upon ulterior measures, if the Bill should be rejected. But his Lordship had secretly determined that they should meet no more; the death of the Convention was pronounced by their adjournment; and the honest, patriotic, but feeble Charlemont, on that Monday morning began to extinguish that institution to which he owed his celebrity and to paralyze that proud, popular spirit to which alone Ireland was indebted for its constitution and independence.

Sunday was passed between his indecision and his timidity. In his weak and virtuous mind, pride and patriotism were ranged on the one side, but imbecility and a sense of incapacity to meet the crisis blinded him to the nature of that insidious conduct which, on this and perhaps the only occasion of his life, he meditated against his benefactors.

He had a meeting of his few friends, most of whom had the same sensations as himself. The Bishop of Derry and Mr. Flood appeared like daring specters to his imagination; he dreaded to meet them at the Convention, and after much deliberation he decided on a course which detracted from his reputation and for which even the critical situation of the country could not allow him one point of justification.

On Monday morning he repaired to the Rotunda, before the usual hour of sitting. None but his own immediate partisans were aware of his intention; the meeting was expected to be most important, and the delegates had no suspicion of his Lordship's early attendance.

On his taking the chair, a delegate immediately arose to expatiate on the insults which the Convention had received during the debate on Saturday. His Lordship became alarmed; a protracted statement might give time for the arrival of delegates, when all his objects would surely be frustrated. He at once took a step which had scarcely a parallel for duplicity, and which, though of the shallowest nature, proved the most effectual.

He instantly silenced the member, as being out of order, on the ground that one House of Parliament never could take

notice of what passed in another; and that the Convention had adopted the rules and orders of Parliament.

Thus by collecting every ray of *feebleness* and *absurdity* into one focus, he prevented any continuation of the subject; and whilst he declared the Convention a House of Parliament, resolved to terminate its existence.

After some conversation, a farewell address was rapidly passed to his Majesty, and his Lordship boldly adjourned the Convention—*sine die*. The Rotunda was quickly vacated, and when the residue of the delegates, the ardent friends of the Volunteer body, came to take their places, they found the doors closed, the Chairman withdrawn, and that body upon which the nation relied for its independence dissolved forever.

The delegates, mortified and abashed, returned to their homes; many friends of Earl Charlemont were soon ashamed of their conduct, and his Lordship's want of sincerity, for the first time, was indisputably proved and underwent well-merited animadversions.

The Volunteer delegates, having returned to their constituents, could give but a puerile account either of their proceedings or of their Chairman. Every eye now turned on the Earl of Bristol, who became the idol of the people. Whilst Lord Charlemont gently descended into the placid ranks of order and of courtesy, the Bishop rose like a phoenix from the ashes of the Convention. The Volunteer corps in many districts beat to arms; they paraded, they deliberated, but their bond of Union was enfeebled or dissevered.

Amongst the weaknesses of Lord Charlemont he had an odious tinge of bigotry, and was decidedly opposed to the admission of Catholics to the full enjoyment of the Constitution. The Bishop, with more zeal and much greater abilities, was their warmest advocate.

Exclusion on the one side and toleration on the other became the theme of both. The dispute ran high; partisans were not wanting, the people began to separate; and this unfortunate controversy gradually terminated in the fatal dissension which never ceased to divide the Irish nation, and at length effected all the objects of mischief that the most ruthless enemies of the Irish people could have expected, or have even wished.





## CHAPTER XIV.

### ADDRESS OF THE VOLUNTEERS TO THE BISHOP OF DERRY—HEATED SCENES IN THE IRISH PARLIAMENT.

After this fatal event, the Volunteers became less calm and more unguarded. The address of one regiment to the Bishop of Derry forms an interesting feature of Irish history, and it gave rise to a reply such as had not been ventured upon by any public character in either country.

A northern corps, of considerable strength, had adopted the patriotic title of the "Bill of Rights Battalion," and had entered into resolutions to "support their Constitution, or be buried under its ruins." A large detachment of that corps marched from that country, determined to uphold the Bishop's principles and support his measures with their lives and fortunes. The address and the answer are strongly illustrative of the spirit of the times, and the embarrassment of the Cabinet.

This declaration ran like wildfire through the nation. The last sentence was the boldest and most unequivocal, the most daring and decisive used in Ireland. A British Earl and Irish Bishop of great wealth, learning, abilities, and of unbounded popular influence, risking his fortune and perhaps his life in support of Ireland, was in every respect a phenomenon.

His Lordship's desire to put himself at the head of the Irish nation was no longer doubtful, and well was he calculated to lead it to every extremity. All men were now convinced that, had his Lordship been President of the National Convention the moderate and courtly Charlemont must either have submitted to his standard or have sunk into nihilism.

#### "BILL OF RIGHTS BATTALION.

"Resolved—That the following Address be presented from this Battalion, *under arms*, to the Earl of Bristol, Lord Bishop of Derry, for his truly patriotic exertions in support of our rights and liberties:—

"To the Right Honorable Earl of Bristol, Lord Bishop of Derry. The Address of the Bill of Rights Battalion of Volunteers.

"My Lord Having, with the eye of silent approbation, viewed your conduct, in every stage of its progress, at the Grand National Convention of Volunteer Delegates, we are impelled, by those generous sentiments that actuate the breasts of Irishmen, to offer your Lordship this address, as a mark of affection and of gratitude

"We see, with indignation and concern, the treatment which the wise, spirited, and salutary Resolutions of the Volunteer Conventions have received; but we trust the virtuous efforts of a united people, under the auspices of your Lordship, will cleanse the Augean stable—the noisome stalls of venality and corruption.

"The gloomy clouds of superstition and *bigotry*, those *engines of disunion*, being fled the realm, the interests of Ireland can no longer suffer by a diversity of *religious persuasions*. All are united in the pursuit of one great object—the extermination of corruption from our Constitution; nor can your Lordship and your virtuous coadjutors, in promoting civil and *religious* liberty, be destitute of the aid of *all* professions

"Permit us to assure you that as freemen, freeholders, and as Volunteers, our exertions to effectuate the grand work of reformation shall be as strenuous as the aim is important; and that we are, with unfeigned gratitude and attachment, your Lordship's most faithful friends

"Signed, by order of the Battalion,

"JOHN ORR, *Sec.*"

A detachment from the Battalion, consisting of eighty rank and file, headed by their lieutenant-colonel, waited on his Lordship, on the 14th instant, at Downhill, and presented, *under arms*, their address, to which his Lordship was pleased to give the subsequent reply:—

"Gentlemen—When you acknowledged the services of your fellow-citizens, in the County of Antrim, in the late struggle for *liberty*, you rewarded their toils in that coin most valuable to *virtuous* men; and your approbation of their efforts, in some measure, consoled them for their want of success.

"But, when you step forth from your *own* country, to hail the individual of another, unknown to you but by his honest endeavors, and unconnected, except by that kindred spirit which seems now, at length, to pervade the whole body

of Irishmen, and, like a Promethean fire, to animate a hitherto lifeless mass, the satisfaction excited in his mind, by the applauses of men who have a right to approve what they *dare to support*, can be known only to those who are conscious of deserving what they are fortunate enough to receive.

“When the *conscience* of a *patriot* bears testimony to the *truth* of the panegyric, and the sincerity of the panegyrists’ praise ceases to be adulation, then they become the wholesome food of the manly mind, and *nourish* that *virtue* they were, at first, intended only to prove.

“But, gentlemen, those who dare assert their own rights should rise above the mean policy of violating the rights of others.

“There is, in this island, a class of citizens equally respectable and infinitely more numerous than those who have hitherto oppressed them—

“Men who have long crouched under the *iron rod* of their *oppressors*, not from any dastardly insensibility to their shackles—not from any unmanly indifference to the inalienable rights of man; but from a pious dread of wounding our common country through the sides of its *tyrants*—

“Men, in whose hearts beats at this instant as high a pulse for liberty, and through whose veins pours a tide of as pure blood, and as noble, too, as any that animates the proudest citizen in Ireland—

“Men, whose ancestors, at the hazard of their property, and with the loss of their lives, obtained the first great Bill of Rights, and upon which every other must be founded—the Magna Charta of Ireland—

“Men, whose ancestors, in the midst of ignorance, could distinguish between the duties of a religionist and the right of a citizen, and who enacted those elementary and never obsolete statutes of *præmunire* which, for centuries, have been an irrefragable monument of their sagacity in distinguishing, and their fortitude in severing, their duty to the *Church of Rome* from their dependence on its Court—

“Men, the undegenerate progeny of such virtuous ancestors, who, with a firmness worthy of our imitation, and still more worthy of our gratitude, have endured those very outrages from their *country* which their forefathers spurned at from its *sovereign*, and who, under a series of accumulated wrongs, which would heighten the disgrace of human policy

if they could be paralleled in its annals, have with a fortitude as unexampled as their oppression, allowed everything dear to the human heart to be wrecked, except their religion and their patriotism, except their acquiescence to the will of an unscrutable God, and their affection for a mistaken and deluded country.

"But, gentlemen, the hour is come when sound policy, as well as irresistible justice will compel those who demand their own rights to support their claim by a restitution of those of their fellow-citizen.

"When Ireland must necessarily avail herself of her whole internal force to ward off foreign encroachments, the better to exercise anew the tyranny of a *part* of the community over the dearest and inalienable rights of *others*.

"For one million of *divided Protestants* can never, in the scale of human government, be a counterpoise against three millions of united *Catholics*. But, gentlemen of the Bill of Rights Battalion, I appeal to yourselves, and summon you to consistency—TYRANNY is not GOVERNMENT and ALLEGIANCE IS DUE ONLY TO PROTECTION.

"BRISTOL.

"14th January, 1784."

The Government now became seriously alarmed. Never was any Government in greater difficulty. Various were its advisers at this important moment, those in council, whose arrogance and arbitrary feelings generally outweighed their prudence, strongly enforced the most dangerous of all measures, the immediate arrest of the Bishop. They contended that, by such energy, and by at once depriving the Volunteers of so enthusiastic a partisan, they might check their progress; but they never reflected on the inability of Government to enforce the resolution.

The daring and dangerous strength of the Bishop's language, the glaring light which by the last sentence was thrown upon the conditional terms of allegiance, as settled under the precedent of 1680, though totally inapplicable to the Irish nation, or to its connection with Great Britain, astounded all men. But the Government soon perceived the inevitable convulsion which must have attended so violent a step as Fitzgibbon had recommended. It would have been the signal for 100,000 Volunteers rushing to the rescue, and one week would have produced an insurrection, the smallest spark would now have inflamed the nation.

The Government resolved to watch the progress of events over which control might be impossible. This course fully corresponded with their utter expectations.

Many of the most patriotic Volunteers thought the Address of the Bishop true in principle, but too strong in terms, particularly as it was addressed to an armed corps, in the center of thousands who could not fail to kindle at the Promethean fire with which his Lordship had so classically animated his oration.

The idea of coercing the Parliament very rapidly lost ground, and in a short time it became the general opinion that Mr. Flood's Reform Bill had been opposed by many upon the principle that it was rather a command than a solicitation; and that it would be prudent to give the Parliament a fair trial before they absolutely condemned them. It was thought that the objection being removed, by the dissolution of the National Convention, a new bill should be presented in the ordinary course of parliamentary proceedings, by members solely in their civil character, and the disposition of the House and the resolves of Government be thus fairly ascertained.

The people were severed, but the Government remained compact; the Parliament was corrupted, the Volunteers were paralyzed, and the high spirit of the nation exhibited a rapid declension. *The jealousy of patriots is always destructive of liberty.*

A new event, however, soon proved the weak delusions of Earl Charlemont. At the dissolution of the Convention he recommended a Reform Bill to be presented to Parliament, as emanating solely from civil bodies, unconnected with military character. Every experience is silly, where its failure can be clearly anticipated, and almost every man in Ireland well knew that such a bill would be lost in such a Parliament. Mr. Flood, however, tried the experiment, and it failed; he attempted it without spirit, because he was without confidence. Mr. Grattan supported it with languor, because it was the measure of his rival. The military bill had been scouted, because it was military, and the civil bill was rejected because it was popular. A corrupt senate never wants a vicious apology.

The Volunteers now drooped, yet their resolutions were published; their meetings were not suspended, and their re-



views continued; but these appeared only as boyish shows, to amuse the languid vanity of their *deluded general*. He passed their lines in military state; he received their salutes with grace and condescension, and recommended them to be tranquil and obedient; and, after a peaceable campaign of four hours' duration, composed his mild and grammatical despatches, and returned to his Marino and to the enjoyment of the more congenial elegancies of literature and of private friendships

The temperate system now gained ground; some patriots lost their energy, others lost their influence, and the Government experienced the wisdom of their negative measures.

That noble institution, the Volunteers of Ireland, survived, however, these blows for some years. This only luminary of her sphere was, by the devices of the Government, gradually obscured, and at length extinguished.

It was not supposed that the concessions to Ireland had been voluntary on the part of Great Britain. They were only a sacrifice to circumstances, with the mental reservation of acting upon the original principle, as often as events might facilitate such a proceeding. The egotistical character of the English trader, the avarice inseparable from mercantile education, and the national impatience, under even an ideal rivalry, united in exciting every effort to neutralize the concessions; and it soon became palpable to both nations that the free trade of Ireland might prove a sore impediment to the gratifications of the English monopoly. England could not so suddenly renounce the force of ancient habit and of engrafted prejudices and become, at once, liberal, enlightened, and magnanimous. No person conversant with the ruling principles of mankind could suppose that her very nature could change in a day, and that she could be sincere towards Ireland as long as it was imagined that the two countries had repugnant interests

The insatiable cupidity of British capitalists and the necessities of the British Government had commenced their coalition even against the prosperity of England. The extravagance of the Government was supplied with facility, by the usuries of the monied interest, and a rein was given to that boundless waste of public money, which terminated in an overwhelming debt, and which nearly exhausted financial ingenuity, having not infrequently assailed the principles and safeguards of her own Constitution.

These concessions were likewise rendered peculiarly unpalatable by political circumstances. England, at that gloomy epoch, had not been able to retain one disinterested friend or sincere ally in Europe. She had subsidized German *mendicants*, and she had purchased human blood; she had hired military slaves from beggarly principalities, but these were not alliances for the honor of Great Britain.

The character which England had justly acquired previously to the year 1780 had raised her reputation above that of all the powers of Europe. The new attempt on Ireland proclaimed that her sordid interests now absorbed every other consideration.

The minister's only excuse for his schemes was the pecuniary wants of the Government. But Mr. Pitt feared that Ireland would murmur at paying her portion of his profuse extravagance. Taxation commenced on luxuries, proceeded to comforts, to necessities, and, at length, extended its grasp to justice and morality. A treaty for a commercial tariff between the two nations was now proceeded on, and exposed that duplicity which had been scarcely suspected. The Irish, unaccustomed to receive any concession or favor, and little versed in the schemes of commercial polity, gave a giddy confidence to the dignified terms in which their terms had been acknowledged. Some able men, however, reasoned that the very composition of British Cabinets, the means of getting into power, and of keeping it; their private interests, and public object, were decidedly adverse to any liberal participation of commercial advantages with Ireland. Upon the English monopolists alone, ministers could depend for replenishing their exchequer, and for their retaining their power. Men also reasoned that if England and Ireland should clash on any point of commerce a British Parliament could not serve two conflicting interests, and an Irish Parliament was not likely to surrender rights she had obtained with so much difficulty and danger.

It was, therefore, palpable (as Mr. Fox had mysteriously declared) that some further international measures were absolutely necessary, and as Ireland could now legislate for her own commerce with all the world, it seemed advisable that a commercial treaty should be contracted by the two countries, which might provide against any collision and secure to both nations the advantages of the federal compact.

Nothing could be more plausible than the theory of this measure, and few things more difficult to carry into execution.

The detailed debates on the commercial propositions are beyond the range of this compact history. But it is essential to remark upon them with reference to the conduct of Great Britain, and it may be proper to allude to the state of Ireland at the moment selected by the minister for making the first indirect attempt to recapture the independence of that devoted country.

The Irish nation was rapidly advancing to eminence and prosperity, her commerce improving, her debt light, the taxes inconsiderable, emigration had ceased, and the population was augmenting, nearly two hundred nobles, and nearly all the commoners resided on their demesnes and expended their rents amidst those who paid them. The Parliament seemed to have been awakened to a more sedulous attention to the wishes of the people. Mr. Pitt took advantage of the moment when he saw that the nation was in good humor and grateful, and he determined whilst he flattered their vanity to invade their constitution. The state of the Irish court and aristocracy, at this period, seemed particularly favorable to the experiment. The constant residence of the landed proprietors was an incalculable benefit; and their influence, in mitigating the avarice of the clergy and the irritating tyranny of the tithing system, was most grateful to the people.

The vice-regal establishment was at that period much more brilliant and hospitable than that of the monarch, the utmost magnificence signalized the entertainments of the Duke and Duchess of Rutland, and their luxury gave a powerful impulse to manufactures and industry. It was to be regretted, however, that this magnificence was accompanied by circumstances which formed a new epoch in the habits of Irish society; a laxity of decorum in both sexes of the fashionable aristocracy had commenced, and though the voluptuous brilliancy of the court was dazzling to the country, it was deficient in that proud, elevated dignity which had generally distinguished that society in former vice-royalties. Nothing could be more honorable than the conduct of the Duke of Rutland, but the sudden relaxation of manners at his court was by no means gratifying to those who had been accustomed to the undeviating strictness of decorum amongst the Irish ladies.

This paroxysm of joy throughout the country, confidence amongst the gentry, and absence of suspicion in the Parliament was judged by the British Government the opportunity most favorable, under color of her commerce, to undermine her Constitution. This proposition for a treaty of commerce between England and Ireland, as two *independent* countries, necessarily required a deeper consideration than any other event of her history. No decisive *international* overt act had, as yet, taken place between the two countries. But Mr. Pitt, in his anxiety to encroach upon the independent spirit of the compact, unintentionally confirmed it upon a clear international principle.

Mr. Orde, the Secretary of the Viceroy, on the 7th of February, 1785, proposed to the Irish Parliament eleven resolutions as a distinct commercial treaty between two *independent* states. As such they were received, but the treaty was at length utterly rejected by the Irish Parliament.

Mr. Brownlow, one of the first country gentlemen of Ireland, most zealously opposed it as a badge of slavery and an attempt to encroach on the independence of his country. It was, however, conditionally accepted, after much discussion; during which a manœuvre was practised by the Secretary which would have disgraced the lowest trader. Mr. Orde expatiated with great plausibility upon the kind concessions of the English Government, and the extraordinary advantages likely to result to Ireland; and urged the House to come to a hasty decision in their favor, "lest the English *monopolist* should pour in applications to the English Parliament to stop their progress as too partial to Ireland." The bait took, and the resolutions were approved and sent back with some alterations.

His artifice, however, was defeated, and Mr. Orde was left in a situation of excessive embarrassment and appeared equally ridiculous to both countries. Mr. Pitt, having gained his first point, conceived it possible to assail more openly the independence of Ireland by attaching her finances and commerce to Great Britain, so that her own Parliament should become, if not impotent, at least contemptible.

Instead, therefore, of rediscussing the eleven resolutions as approved by Ireland, he brought twenty propositions before the English Parliament, incorporated in a Bill framed with such consummate artifice that it affected to confer favors, whilst it rendered the Irish Parliament only the register of



all English statutes relating to commerce; and by a perpetual money bill appropriated a proportion of her hereditary revenue to the uses of the British Navy.

Mr Orde himself was utterly uncertain how to proceed, and after many adjournments, on the 12th of August, 1785, he moved for leave to bring in a bill pursuant to Mr. Pitt's twenty propositions. The country gentlemen of Ireland, though they did not understand the commercial details of the subject, perceived the design of the minister. A storm arose in Parliament, the landed interests of the country were alarmed, the country gentlemen grew boisterous, the law officers were arrogant, the patriots retorted and rendered the debate one of the most inflammatory that had for some years been witnessed. Long and furious was that remarkable contest. Fitzgibbon, the Attorney General, exhibited an arrogance which more than equalled any of his former exhibitions, he insulted many, and used the most overbearing language to all who opposed him. The debate continued all night, and, at nine o'clock next morning, the violence was undiminished, and it was difficult to put the question; at length a division at once announced the equivocal victory of the minister. The numbers for Government were 127, against the minister 108, leaving only a majority of 19. As the motion was only for leave to bring in the bill, it was obvious that on a second reading it would have been disgracefully rejected. Mr. Flood then moved a declaration of rights; another division still less favorable to the minister succeeded; an adjournment, therefore, and a prorogation took place, and the subject was never renewed.

Mr. Pitt never would have brought in this bill had he not been assured of success by the Irish Secretary; this defeat, therefore, was the more galling, and it confirmed, in his persevering and inflexible mind, a determination if he could not rule the Irish Parliament to annihilate the independence of Ireland. Mr. Pitt was never scrupulous as to means, and a much more important point shortly confirmed his determination by proving that, upon vital subjects, he had not yet sufficiently humbled the people or been able sufficiently to seduce their representatives.

These propositions were in fact defeated by the honest obstinacy of the country gentlemen, and by the influence and talents of Mr. Grattan and Mr. Flood, who, upon this subject alone, were perfectly in unison. It is worthy of observation



that the zeal and honesty of Mr. Connolly, in supporting the independence of his country against the agency of Mr. Orde, were utterly reversed by his subsequently supporting the still more destructive measures of his corrupt and unfortunate relative.

During these scenes some men who, though not of the highest order of talent, were in considerable reputation and of untainted integrity, exerted themselves in defence of their country; amongst the most active was Mr. Forbes, the member for Drogheda. Without any very distinguished natural abilities, and but moderately acquainted with literature, by his zealous attachment to Mr. Grattan, his public principles, and attention to business, he received much respect and acquired some influence in the House of Commons. He had practised at the bar with a probability of success; but he mistook his course and became a statesman, as which he never could rise to any great distinction. As a lawyer, he undervalued himself and was modest; as a statesman, he overrated himself and was presumptuous. He benefitted his party by his indefatigable zeal, and reflected honor upon it by his character; he was a good Irishman, and to the last undeviating in his public principles. He died in honorable exile, as Governor of the Bahama Isles.

In a class lower as a politician, but higher as a man of letters and equal in integrity, stood Mr. Hardy, the biographer of Earl Charlemont. He had been returned to Parliament by the interest of Earl Granard, and faithfully followed the fortunes of that nobleman and his relative, Earl Moira, throughout all the political vicissitudes of Ireland.

His mind was too calm and his habits too refined for the rugged drudgery of the bar—he was not sufficiently profound for a statesman, and was too mild for a political wrangler—his ambition was languid, and he had no love of lucre—he therefore was not eminent either as a politician or a lawyer. Like many other modest and accomplished men, he was universally esteemed. He had sufficient talents, had he possessed energy, and his interest was always the last of his considerations; his means were narrow, and his exertions inconsiderable.

Mr. (afterwards Viscount) Carleton was, during a part of this important period, Solicitor General of Ireland, and no man was less adequate to the parliamentary duties of that office. He was, of course, but little noticed by the recorders

of that epoch, and is almost a dead letter in the memoirs of Ireland. His conduct on the Union, however, was remarkable.

Viscount Carleton was the son of a respectable merchant of Cork, and was created Solicitor General when the superior law offices were considered as stations of very considerable weight and of much official dignity. At the bar he was efficient; on the bench he was exemplary. With a plain and exclusively forensic talent, cultivated by an assiduity nothing could surpass, he attained very considerable professional eminence; his whole capacity seemed to have been formed into points of law, regularly numbered, and always ready for use. His limited genius seldom wandered beyond the natural boundary, but whenever it chanced to stray to general subjects, it appeared always to return to its symmetrical technicalities with great gratification.

Habit and application had made him a singular proficient in that methodical hair-splitting of legal distinctions, and in reconciling the incongruity of conflicting precedents, which generally beget the reputation of an able lawyer. The Government were glad to get him out of Parliament, and without intending it, did an essential service to the due administration of justice.

As Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, his naturally gentle manners and affability, his legal knowledge, and the rectitude of his decisions procured him the unanimous approbation of his profession. He had no enemies. But, even in his prime, he was a most feeble and inefficient legislator and statesman; his capacity was not sufficiently comprehensive to embrace subjects of constitutional polity. He brought the attributes of his trade into Parliament, and appeared either blind or indifferent to those varied and luxuriant labyrinths which the principles of civil liberty eternally disclose, and which the enlightened legislator never fails to discover and never ceases to enjoy.

When men shall read the childish, contemptible, and strained attempts at reasoning, which were pronounced by him upon the discussion of the Union, and reflect upon the duplicity of his professions and his predetermined emigration, it must be regretted that a judge so competent and independent and a man so respected should have yielded his country against his conviction and lent his fair fame to the corrupting minister.

## CHAPTER XV.

### COLLISION BETWEEN THE PARLIAMENTS OF IRELAND AND ENGLAND —PITT WORKING FOR THE UNION.

The British Government, for a long time, affected to relinquish the idea of opposing the commercial interests of Ireland. It was determined to let the Irish take their own course, and patiently to await till circumstances might enable them to act more decisively against their independence.

Mr. Pitt was obliged to rest upon his oars, his own bark was tempest tossed, whilst that of Ireland was running rapidly before a prosperous wind. This was the state of Ireland after the proposition-tempest had subsided, when the Duke of Rutland's incessant conviviality deprived (October, 1787) the British Peerage of an honorable, generous, and high-minded nobleman, and Ireland of a Viceroy, whose government did nothing, or worse than nothing, for the Irish people. With the aristocracy the Duke was singularly popular, and he was not disliked by any class of the community; but his advisers were profligate, and his measures were corrupt. His Grace and the Duchess were reckoned the handsomest couple in Ireland.

The Marquis of Buckingham was sent a second time to govern Ireland. As a moderate, hard-working Viceroy, with a Catholic wife, he was selected as not unlikely to be agreeable to the Irish.

Little, however, was it supposed that the most important and embarrassing of all constitutional questions between the two countries was likely to occur during his administration. Unfortunately, however, such did arise, through the necessity of appointing a Regent during the Monarch's aberration of intellect.

This great question and its influence on the federative compact of the two nations now entirely occupied the attention of both Parliaments. The Prince, at that period, held a line of politics and employed a class of servants different from those he afterwards adopted. Mr. Pitt well knew that his own reign, and that of the Cabinet he commanded, were in danger—that they could endure no longer than some tat-

ters of the royal prerogative and restraints on the Regent should remain in his hands as minister, by which he could curb the Regency, which might otherwise be fatal to his ambition and his cabinet.

He therefore resisted with all his energy the heir apparent's right to the prerogatives of his father, and struggled to restrain the Prince from many of those essential powers of the executive authority.

The Prince acted with that dignity of which he was such a master, but, through a state of necessity, submitted reluctantly to the restraints prescribed by his own servants; and, from a delicacy to the feeling of his mother, retained in his service a minister whom, on every other ground, he would have been more justified in dismissing with indignation.

The Irish nation had nothing to do with this private circumstance, and the Parliament would not obey the minister or submit to the mandates of the British Government. They decided that the Prince was their Regent, in virtue of the federative compact, and they also determined that he should have all the regal prerogatives connected with the monarchy of Ireland.

Upon this subject debates arose, more embarrassing than any that had ever taken place in the British Parliament. It was a *casus omissus*, both in the British Revolution of 1688 and in the Irish Constitution of 1782.

The question was whether the Parliament of Ireland were competent by address or otherwise to invest the Regent with more extensive privileges, as to Ireland, than the British Parliament had thought fit to entrust to him in England.

This point was without precedent, but it was argued that if an act of Parliament were necessary no Regent could be appointed, for an act implied the existence of the third estate and the proper proceeding was, therefore, by address. The probability of His Majesty's recovery had a powerful influence on placemen and official connections. The Marquis of Buckingham took a decisive part against the Prince, and made bold and hazardous attempts upon the rights of the Irish Parliament. That body was indignant at his presumption, and he found it impossible to govern or control even the habitual supporters of every administration. Fitzgibbon, the Attorney General, was promised the seals if he succeeded for Mr Pitt, and he even announced that every opponent

should be made the victim of his suffrage. Lord Buckingham even threatened those who would not coincide with the British Parliament; the then powerful family of Ponsonby, decided supporters of the Government, on this occasion seceded from the Marquis, and which gave rise to the famous and spirited Round Robin. Many, however, may be induced to ask, why it was expedient to be honest in a circle.

After long and ardent debates an address of the Irish Parliament was voted to the Prince, declaring him Regent of the Kingdom of Ireland in as full, ample, and unqualified a manner as was enjoyed by his Royal Father.

The words, though simple, were as comprehensive as the English language could make them. The terms are: "Under the style and title of Prince Regent of Ireland, in the name and on behalf of his Majesty, to exercise and administer, according to the laws and constitution of this kingdom, all regal powers, jurisdiction, and prerogatives to the Crown and Government thereof belonging."

In the Commons, the Address was moved by Mr. Grattan and was carried without a division. It was moved in the Lords by the Earl of Charlemont, and was carried by a majority of only 19. Contents 45—Non-contents 26.

In the Commons, the number upon Mr. Grattan's motion, for thus transmitting the Address were—for the motion, 130; against it, 74.

The Address having passed both the Lords and Commons, it was sent to the Viceroy to be transmitted to His Royal Highness. The Marquis of Buckingham peremptorily refused acquiescence, and an embassy of two Lords and four Commoners was immediately appointed to humbly present the Address, in the name of the nation, to the Prince. A severe resolution of censure was then moved against the Lord Lieutenant for a breach of official duty. It passed both Houses, and obliged him to quit the country. Though his extensive patronage was craftily applied and had procured him many adherents, he never afterwards could make any head in the Irish Parliament. The Address was the boldest step yet taken by the Irish nation, and it brought the independence of Ireland to a practical issue.

The vital importance of the Regency Question consolidating the independence of the Irish nation, and the fallacious influence which it afterwards afforded to the arguments for



extinguishing that independence offer considerations more grave and more comprehensive than any that have occurred since England, by the Renunciation Act, admitted her usurpation.

The facts and reasoning on that subject are beyond the range of this volume—they are therefore here necessarily epitomized. However, somewhat more than superficial detail is indispensable to dispel that mist of mingled prejudice and ignorance of the English people which has never ceased to obscure from their view every clear prospect of the true state of Ireland, when she evinced her unqualified adherence to the genuine spirit of the constitution.

In 1789 two branches of the legislature, the Peers and the Commons of Great Britain and of Ireland, were by common law originally, and by statute law subsequently, as distinct as those of any other independent nation. The third estate, the king, was common Monarch of both; the two crowns placed on the same brow were, by the common constitution, entailed forever on the same dynasty; the executive power was united; the other branches utterly separate.

The king of both countries having become incapable of executing his functions for either, his eldest son and heir apparent to the throne, in the full vigor of health and intellect, by the incapacity of his father, became the proper guardian of those two realms to the throne of which he was constitutionally to succeed.

So circumstanced, the British minister who as such had no constitutional right to interfere with Ireland, thought proper, through the British Parliament, to shackle the Regency with restrictions that deprived the executive power in England of its constitutional prerogatives; such a measure if adopted by Ireland, would have left her king incompetent, and her Regency imperfect, during the necessary suspension of the Monarch's capacity to govern.

The Viceroy of Ireland, under the dictation of the British minister, resisted the legislature of Ireland in its own course of appointing the same Regent; and a collision ensued: the Irish supporting, and the English curtailing, the constitutional prerogative of the executive branch of the constitution in the office of Regent.

In this state of things the session was opened on the 5th February by the Marquis of Buckingham, who, in his

speech from the throne informed the two houses of the severe indisposition with which the King was afflicted, and at the same time acquainted them that he had directed all the documents respecting his Majesty's health which could assist their deliberations to be laid before them

On Wednesday, the 11th, Mr. Connolly moved that "an address should be presented to the Prince of Wales, requesting him to take on himself the Government of Ireland as Regent thereof during his Majesty's incapacity" (without any restriction).

This motion gave rise to a long and violent debate, in which the Attorney General, Mr. Fitzgibbon (afterwards Chancellor of Ireland) eminently distinguished himself in opposition to the motion. It was supported by Mr. Grattan, Mr. Ponsonby, Mr. Curran, and other eminent speakers, and was ultimately carried without a division.

On Monday, the 16th, the House of Lords being met, the Earl of Charlemont moved for an address to the Prince of Wales similar to that voted by the Commons, which, after some debate, was carried by a majority of nineteen. A protest was entered signed by seventeen Lords.

On Thursday, the 19th, both houses waited upon the Lord Lieutenant with their address, and requested him to transmit the same; with this request his Excellency refused to comply, returning for answer that under the impressions he felt of his official duty and of the oath he had taken he did not consider himself warranted to lay before the Prince an address purporting to invest his Royal Highness with powers to take upon him the government of the realm, before he *should* be enabled by law so to do, and therefore he declined transmitting their address to Great Britain.

Upon the return of the Commons to their own House, and the answer of the Lord Lieutenant being reported to them, Mr. Grattan observed that in a case so extremely new it would be highly improper to proceed with hurry or precipitation; the House was called upon to act with dignity, firmness, and decision; and therefore that due time might be had for deliberation he would move the question of adjournment to the following day. The question was put and carried without opposition.

On the next day he moved that his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, having thought proper to decline to transmit to his Royal Highness, George, Prince of Wales, the address

of both Houses of Parliament, a competent number of members be appointed to present the said address to his Royal Highness.

Mr. Grattan's motion was passed without any division, whereupon he moved, "That Mr. Connolly do attend the Lords with the said resolution and acquaint them that this House requests them to appoint members of their own body to join with the members of the Commons in presenting the said address." This also passed without any division, and Mr. Connolly went up to the Lords accordingly. The message received in reply was that the Lords had concurred in the resolution of the Commons, and had appointed his Grace the Duke of Leinster, and the Earl of Charlemont, to join with such members as the Commons should appoint to present the address of both Houses to his Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales.

Mr. Grattan then moved that the Right Hon. Thomas Connolly, Right Hon. J. O'Neil, Right Hon. W. Ponsonby, and J. Stewart, Esq., should be appointed commissioners on the part of the Commons for the purpose of presenting the address to his Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, and they were appointed accordingly.

These motions having passed, Mr. Grattan then moved that the two Houses of Parliament had discharged an indispensable duty in providing for the third estate of the Irish Constitution (rendered incomplete through the King's incapacity) by appointing the Prince of Wales Regent of Ireland. This motion was carried after a long debate. Ayes 150, Noes 71.

Mr. Grattan then moved that it is the opinion of this House "That the answer of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant to both Houses, in refusing to transmit the said address, is *ill advised*, and tends to convey an unwarrantable and *unconstitutional censure on the conduct of both Houses.*"

Mr. Grattan's motion of *censure* was then put, on which the House divided, and there appeared for the motion 115, against it 83.

On the 25th, resolutions of the committee of supply (which provides for the payment of the interest of the national debt, the annuities and establishments) being read, Mr. Grattan moved "That the words for two months only, ending the 26th of May, 1789, be added. On the question being put, there appeared Ayes 104, Noes 85.

Mr. Grattan then moved that the *army* be provided for to the 25th of May only, which motion was carried. Ayes 102, Noes 77.

This determination of the Irish legislature in asserting their constitutional independence, and their entire rejection of all subserviency to the views or dictates of the British Parliament, was founded not only on the nature of their federative compact, but on the very principles of that constitution which it was their mutual duty to preserve in its full integrity.

By that constitution it was indispensable that every statute should receive its consummation only by the express assent of the King, as the third state of that constitution.

In this case no third estate existed in a capacity to assent to or consummate any statute, and no *express* provision had been made by the constitution for such an emergency. The Irish legislature, therefore, having no *competent* third estate to consummate a statute, adopted the next step admitted by the constitution, of proceeding by address, for which they had the English precedent of 1688.

The British Minister, however, determined to proceed by statute, and this difference therefore arose between the two legislatures; England proceeded by means which could not be constitutionally consummated, Ireland proceeded by means which constitutionally could. The Viceroy surrendered himself to the minister; the Irish legislature adhered to the Prince, and asserted their independence by an overt act, which England never since forgave; and, on the Union, used that act of Irish constitutionality as an argument for annihilating that legislature, which had dared to support the rights of their Prince against the ambition of his minister.

International controversies are frequently referred to the arbitration of foreign states, disinterested on the subject, and had the question been submitted to such an arbitrator, "Whether the British legislature, abetting the conspiracy of Mr. Pitt, to abridge the executive power of its inherent rights of their own Regent, and had committed a crime, should be extinguished for its inroad on the constitution", the awful sentence must have been pronounced against Great Britain; and even the dignified language of the Prince himself evinced nothing adverse to the principle of so just a condemnation.

Previous to the departure of the delegates to present the address to the Prince of Wales, a declaration by the Viceroy



had been made public, which threatened to visit with his displeasure or reward by his favors every member of the legislature who could neither be deprived of office for his resistance or induced to accept one for his desertion.

This declaration gave rise to the then celebrated Round Robin, which was subscribed by a great number of the highest and most leading characters of both Houses of Parliament, pledging themselves as a body and as individuals, against every attempt by the Government either to seduce or to intimidate them. This was a fatal blow to all further struggles for the Viceroy. The tide ran too strongly to be resisted; the rank and influence of those who signed that document could no longer be opposed, and proved to the Viceroy the impossibility of his continuing the Government of Ireland, upon such a principle, and of course he determined to retire from the Viceroyalty.

The Delegates now proceeded to London to deliver to the Prince the joint address of both Houses of the Irish Parliament. The first nobles and commoners of that kingdom investing him with all those royal rights and prerogatives which had been refused to him by his British subjects, was too grand and gratifying an embassy not to receive the highest honors and attention his Royal Highness and his friends could bestow. Nothing could exceed the dignified cordiality and splendour with which they were received by the Regent on that occasion. He felt all the importance of such a grant, and if gratitude has any permanent station in the hearts of monarchs, the Irish people had reason to expect every favor that future power could confer on a nation whose firmness and fidelity had given him so imperishable a proof of their attachment.

The words of the address bespeak the independence and loyalty of the Irish legislature, and fix the constitutional limitation to the power conferred by them; they prayed:

“We, his Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the lords spiritual and temporal and the Commons of Ireland in Parliament assembled, beg leave to approach your Royal Highness with hearts full of the most loyal and affectionate attachment to the person and government of your Royal Father, to express the deepest and most graceful sense of the numerous blessings which we have enjoyed under his illustrious House, and at the same time to condole with your Royal High-



ness upon the grievous malady with which it has pleased Heaven to afflict the best of sovereigns.

"We beg leave humbly to request that your Royal Highness will be pleased to take upon you the government of this realm, during the continuance of his Majesty's present indisposition, and no longer; and under the style and title of Prince Regent of Ireland, in the name and on behalf of his Majesty, to exercise and administer, according to the laws and constitution of this kingdom, all regal powers, jurisdictions, and prerogatives to the crown and government thereof belonging."

The reply of his Royal Highness to this embassy from Ireland is a document of most intrinsic value to the character, and ought to have been so to the interests of that calumniated and ruined island.

That royal document expressly upheld and for ever records the loyal, consistent, and constitutional principles and conduct which guided the Irish legislature in that unprecedented proceeding, therein not only explicitly, but most ardently eulogized by the heir apparent.

Yet it is unfortunate for the character and consistency of British Governments, to find seated high in the cabinet of George the Fourth, the very minister who, in the Irish Parliament, in 1799, gave the retort courteous to every word so uttered by that monarch, as Regent in 1789, and stigmatized as treason that just eulogium uttered but ten years before upon their loyalty.

Posterity, however, will read with disgust that, within so short a period, the very act which elicited those just and florid praises of devoted Ireland, was converted into a libel, and made a leading argument to effect the annihilation of the very legislature they had so ardently applauded.

It is a remarkable coincidence in Irish annals, that Providence was pleased to diminish her visitation on the King's capacity on the very day first appointed by the Prince to receive his investiture as Regent of Ireland, through the hands of the Irish Delegates; the object of this mission, therefore, could have no ulterior operation, and they returned to their country with every public honor and private estimation which their embassy and their characters so justly merited. The Prince therefore had no power previous to the Union of exemplifying his declaration of gratitude to Ireland. After the

Union, when *Imperial* Regent, his British ministers showed no disposition to give his Royal Highness that power or opportunity; his energies seemed to retire as his powers were advancing, and when he became actual monarch of both countries, events proved that the Regencies were forgotten, and that gratitude was not on record.



Composed from the Book of Kells.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### IRELAND ACTS ON HER INDEPENDENCE—PROSPEROUS STATE OF THE NATION—AGITATION FOR CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION COMMENCED.

Upon the return of the Delegates to Ireland, the first epoch which we have been considering in this epitome of her history was consummated; her *Rise*. She had arisen from servitude to freedom, from a subservient to an independent Nation; the acquirement of that independence was a revolution, but it was a revolution without bloodshed. It was rather a regeneration, accomplished by the almost unanimous exertion of all the rank, the wealth, the character and the honesty of a vast population; the highest of the Aristocracy, and the humblest of the people joined hand in hand to regain their independence; and it may be well termed a loyal revolution, because the English legislature, by their own voluntary act, admitted their own previous usurpation, and renounced all further pretensions to dominate over Ireland; and the King of Great Britain on his throne received and acknowledged his Irish subjects altogether legislatively unconnected with the rest of England. From that day Ireland rose in wealth, in trade, and in manufactures, agriculture, and every branch of industry that could enhance her value or render a people rich and prosperous. She had acquired her seat amongst the nations of the world, she had asserted her independence against the insolence of Portugal, she had suggested an Irish navy to protect her shores, she had declared a perpetual league of mutual amity and aid with Great Britain. The court of her Viceroy appeared as splendid as her monarch's. Her nobles resided within her borders, and expended their great fortunes amongst the Irish people, the Commons all resided on their own demesnes, supported and fostered a laborious and tranquil tenantry. The peace of the country was perfect, no standing army, no militia, no police were wanting for its preservation; the activity of the Volunteers had suppressed crime in every district, religious prejudices were gradually diminishing; means of amelioration were in contemplation or in progress. The distinctness of Ireland had been proclaimed to

the world by overt acts of herself, and of her monarch and the King of England. The Irish sceptre in the hands of her King had touched the charter of her independence, on the faith of nations; before God and man its eternal freedom had been declared, and should have been inviolable. But by some inscrutable will of heaven it was decreed that she should soon be again erased from the list of nations, punished without a crime, and laid prostrate at the feet of a jealous ally.

The spirit and independence of the conjoint Peers and Commons of Ireland, and their reception by the heir apparent, convinced the Viceroy of the impossibility of retaining his office; his declaration of departure being again repeated, was greeted in Dublin as a measure of the highest gratification to the Whigs and Patriots, and of the deepest regret to the adherents of the minister.

However, though the recovery of the King rendered the appointment of their Regent, at the time, unnecessary, it sufficiently asserted their constitutional and national independence, and as we have already mentioned, consummated that epoch which is termed the Rise of Ireland.

One observation is here not out of place, and it is rather a remarkable occurrence that it was during the short interval which occurred between the first and second announcement of the entire incapacity of King George the Third, that he was induced by the same ministers who had resisted the regent to forego his own Royal acts, rescind his own constitutional assent, melt down his Irish Crown, and place his Irish subjects under the guardianship of a mutilated and absent representation. It is therefore not easy to reconcile to ordinary reason the probability that a conscientious and moral monarch, during the interval of a disease so deep-seated and enfeebling to the human intellect, could calmly or judiciously reflect on a measure so comprehensive in its results, and so corrupt in its attainment, as the legislative Union.

It was under all these circumstances, and the departure of the Viceroy, that the Earl of Westmoreland came over as his successor. But the line of his politics or government had not preceded him.

Mr Pitt felt that he had made but slight progress towards his scheme of a union with Ireland; his projects had turned against himself; and the Irish Parliament, on the subject of the Regency, had taught him a lesson he had but little ex-

pectation of learning. However, the spirit of the Irish confirmed that austere and pertinacious statesman in his resolution to rule Ireland in Great Britain, and to leave her no power to impede the course of his ambition.

The Earl of Westmoreland was by no means ill adapted to the Irish people. He was sufficiently reserved to command respect, and dignified enough to uphold his station. His splendid conviviality procured him many rational partisans, and his extreme hospitality engendered at least temporary friendships. He was honorable and good natured, and, among the higher orders and his intimate associates, he was a popular Viceroy.

His Secretary, Major Hobart (Lord Buckingham), was more a man of the world, and was admirably calculated for the higher classes of the Irish.

A perfect gentleman, cheerful, convivial, and conciliating, though decided; liberal, yet crafty; kindhearted, but cautious; and with a mixture of pride and affability in his manner, he particularly adapted himself to his official purposes by occasionally altering the proportion of each, as persons or circumstances required their application. With an open, prepossessing countenance, he gained wonderfully upon every gentleman with whom he associated. The period of Lord Westmoreland's government was certainly the summit of Irish prosperity. From the epoch of his departure she may date the commencement of her downfall. Lord Westmoreland's was charged with being a jobbing Government, but it was less so than that of his predecessors; and if he did not diminish, he certainly did not aggravate the burthens of the people.

When Lord Westmoreland arrived, Ireland was in a state of great prosperity. He met a strong opposition in Parliament, but it was an honest opposition, the guardian of public liberty, and not a faction. It was constitutional in principle, and formidable in talent; it was rather a party to effect wholesome measures, than a systematic opposition to the Government. Only two subjects of vital importance were introduced during his administration, most of the others being plausible demands, calculated rather to gratify the people than to produce any radical change in the system of Government. A Place Bill, a Pension Bill, and a Responsibility Bill, an inquiry into the sales of Peerages, and into the Police of



Dublin, were amongst the most material measures pressed by the opposition during his viceroyalty. The Place Bill, however, supposed to be remedial, eventually became the most important that had ever been passed by an independent Irish Parliament.

The perseverance of the able men who formed the opposition at length gave a pretence to the Minister to purchase an armistice, by conceding some of the measures they had so long and pertinaciously resisted.

It could not have been flattering, however, to the warm supporters of the Government to be required by the Secretary to become absolutely inconsistent, and to change their language without a change of circumstances, and recant opinions they had so frequently declared in conjunction with the minister.

Some of the active supporters of the Government, therefore, determined not to interfere in these concessions, and the opposition, on the other hand, was so keen at the chase, and so gratified at the concession of their long-sought measures, that they but superficially regarded the details or the mode of conceding, and never reflected, as legislators or statesmen, that one of those measures might prove a deadly weapon, by which the executive Government might destroy the Parliament under pretence of purifying it. A bill was brought in to vacate the seats of the members accepting offices under Government, omitting the term of *bona fide* offices; thereby leaving the minister a power of packing Parliament.

The opposition, blinded by their honest zeal, considered this ruinous bill a species of Reform, and were astonished at the concession of a measure at once so popular, and which they conceived to be so destructive of ministerial corruption.

The sagacity of Mr. Pitt, however, clearly showed him that the measure would put the Irish Parliament eventually into his hands; and the sequel proved, that, without that Bill, worded as it was, the corruption by the ministers, the rebellion, force and terror combined, could not have effected the Union.

The Place, Pension, and Responsibility Bills were proposed by Mr. Grattan, *acceded to by the Viceroy*, passed into laws, and considered as a triumph of the opposition over the venality of the Government.

Mr Grattan was certainly the most incorruptible public character on the records of the Irish Parliament. He wor-

shipped popularity, yet there was a tinge of aristocracy in his devotion, which while it qualified its enthusiasm, still added to its purity.

Such men may occasionally err in judgment, and may be misled by their ardor; this was the case with Mr. Grattan, on this armistice with the Government.

Mr. Grattan did not always see the remote operation of his project.

He was little adapted to labor on the details of measures; he had laid the broad foundation of the Constitution, but sometimes regarded lightly the outbuildings that were occasionally attached to it. On this occasion the Ministers were too subtle for him, and he heeded not the fatal clause which made no distinction between real and nominal offices. He considered not, that though offices of real emolument could not be so frequently vacated and transferred as to give the Minister any very important advantage, those of nominal value might be daily given and resigned, without observation, and that, as the House was then constituted, the Minister might almost form the Commons at his pleasure.

By comparing the Irish Parliament at the epochs of the Proposition and the Regency Bills, and at that of 1800, the fatal operation of the Place Bill can be no longer questionable. In one word—it carried the Union.

During the administration of Lord Westmoreland the first question (which so deeply affected the subsequent events of Ireland) was the partial emancipation of Irish Catholics. Though the question did not, when introduced, appear to involve the consideration of a legislative union, its results communicated a powerful influence to that measure.

The national annihilation of Ireland was, in a considerable degree, promoted by the impolitic mismanagement of the Catholic population.

Though many of the penal and restrictive statutes by which the Catholics had been so long excluded from the most valuable rights, not only of British subjects, but of freemen, were repealed, and though the power of taking freeholds and possessing land property was restored to them, these concessions were but a stimulus to further claims, and for which they created a most rational expectation.

The Catholics argued that if they were allowed to purchase freeholds, and to receive, by descent, lands in fee, it

must consequently be an injustice, an absurdity, and an insult to debar them from the elective franchise, and the privileges which were by law attached to the possession of the same species of property by their Protestant fellow-subjects.

They said that noblemen and commoners of great fortune, of then persuasion, who had been deprived of their rights by their attachment to hereditary monarchy, notwithstanding those partial concessions, still remained loaded with many attributes of actual slavery, in the midst of a free people; that after a century of loyal and peaceable demeanor towards a Protestant dynasty, they were still to be stigmatized as neither trustworthy nor loyal. Their language, firm and decided, was rational, and eventually successful. Government were now alarmed, and affected to take a liberal view of the subject; but were by no means unanimous as to the extent of the concessions. They conceived the tranquillity might be attained by the mere religious toleration. This may be true, where but a small portion of the people were claimants, far different, however, where those excluded form the bulk, and the exclusionists a small minority of the people. However, the concessions were important, and greater than could have been credible before Lord Westmoreland's administration. The grant to Catholics of the elective franchise was the act more of Major Hobart and his government than himself. The forty shilling franchise was then granted to the poorest and most dependent peasantry of Europe, who might one day be influenced by one motive and the next day by its reverse. It is easier to grant than to recall, and strong doubts were fairly entertained as to the wisdom of that part of it.

The first important debates, on granting the elective franchise to the Irish Catholics, were in 1792, on a petition, presented in their favor. It was then looked upon as a most daring step; intolerance was then in full vigor, and Mr. Lafouche moved to reject the petition without entering on its merits.

The prejudice against the Catholics was then so powerful that their petition was rejected with indignation by a division of 208 to 23.

The Government, by this majority, hoped to render similar applications hopeless, but a few months after it was found necessary that the measure should be recommended

from the throne and supported by Government, and was carried in the same House by a large majority. The strange proceeding of the Irish Parliament on this subject may be accounted for by their dread of reclamation by the Catholics (should they be admitted to power) of their forfeited estates held by Peers and Commoners, by grants of Elizabeth, Cromwell, and William, but which, on more mature reflection, they found to be chimerical.

The Legislature, however, by granting the elective franchise to the Irish Catholics conceded to them the very essence of the British Constitution.

Mr. Pitt's ulterior views as to Ireland solve the enigma that the virulent enemies of the Catholics, who opposed the *slightest concession*, should *directly* after vote them the *elective franchise*. Mr. Pitt's object was to reciprocally exasperate the two parties against each other. The indignant rejection of the petition of 1792 inflamed the Catholics with resentment, and elated the Protestants with triumph. The concession of 1793 reversed these passions, and both parties felt equally disgusted. The Minister took every advantage of the unpopularity of the Parliament.

A very remarkable incident of inconsistency occurred in the House of Lords upon this occasion. Lord Clare, the most unqualified enemy the Catholics ever had, and the most virulent against them, on the debate in 1793 spoke and voted for giving them the elective franchise, which he had previously asserted would be a breach of the Coronation Oath, and destructive to the Church and State. On the other hand, Lord Charlemont, always the most zealous friend of the Irish people, and the most distinguished of the gentle breed of patriots, on the same debate spoke in favor of the Catholics, yet voted against any concession whatsoever.

Lord Clare wished to do mischief on Mr. Pitt's system, even at his own expense. Lord Charlemont wished to do good, but was too shallow to see the designs of the Chancellor, or even to mix policy with his candor.

Though Lord Westmoreland was powerfully opposed in Parliament during the whole of his government, the country was in peace, and he was zealously supported. Had he not been recalled under the pretence of making way for a general pacification, the nation had no reason to suppose his place would be much better filled. His recall and the ap-



pointment and deposition of Lord Fitzwilliam, his successor, within three months completed the train which Mr. Pitt had laid for the explosion. Having divided the country and obtained the means of packing the Parliament, through the Place Bill, he suffered some men to disseminate the French revolutionary mania; and having proceeded so far, recalled Lord Westmoreland and encouraged others to raise their loyalty into the region of madness.

His Lordship had not completed the usual term of residence, nor had he failed in his duties, and his appearing not to feel hurt at his abrupt recall was mysterious, and seemed to forbode some important scheme or deception.

The appointment of Lord Fitzwilliam, who had previously opposed the administration, was, perhaps, the most deep and treacherous design ever contemplated by any minister. But Mr. Pitt had never been in Ireland, and experienced difficulties he did not anticipate. He fancied he might excite and suppress commotion at his convenience; but in deciding upon forcing a premature insurrection for a particular object he did not calculate on the torrent of blood that would be shed, and the inveterate hatred that might be perpetuated against the British Government. His resolution was taken, and he prevailed upon one of the most pure and respected of the Whig leaders to become Viceroy of Ireland, under a supposition that he was selected to tranquilize and to foster that country. The Minister wanted only a high-minded victim as an instrument to agitate the Irish. His Lordship had great estates in Ireland—was one of its most kind and indulgent landlords, and was extremely popular. His manners were, perhaps, too mild, but he had enlarged principles of political liberty, and of religious toleration. Mr. Pitt had assured him he should have the gratification of fully emancipating the Irish Catholics. Lord Fitzwilliam accepted the office only on that consideration, and with this entire conviction he repaired to Dublin to carry into immediate execution what he conceived would forever tranquilize the country. Mr. Pitt intended to inflame the country—throw upon the Viceroy the insinuation of disobedience—and openly charge him with a precipitancy of which he himself was the real author.

Never was a scheme conducted with more address and secrecy. Lord Fitzwilliam was received with open arms by the people—he immediately commenced his arrangements—



and Mr. Pitt began as closely to counteract them. In every act of his government Lord Fitzwilliam was either deceived or circumvented.

Mr. Pitt's end was answered; he thus raised the Catholics to the height of expectation, and by suddenly recalling their favorite Viceroy he inflamed them to the degree of generating the commotions he meditated, which would throw the Protestants into the arms of England for protection, whilst the horrors would be aggravated by the mingled conflicts of parties, royalists and republicans.

By this measure, too, Mr. Pitt had the gratification of humbling Earl Fitzwilliam, disgracing the Whigs, overwhelming the Opposition, turning the Irish into fanatics, and thereby preparing the gentry of that country for the project that was immediately to succeed it. The conduct of the Duke of Portland must have been either culpable or imbecile—he must either have betrayed Lord Fitzwilliam to Mr. Pitt, or Mr. Pitt must have made him a blind instrument of treachery to his friend. The first is most probable, as he remained in office after his friend had been disgraced, and, in direct contradiction to his own declaration, aided in the fatal project which was effected by that treachery.

The limits of this record do not admit of stating in detail all the important facts which constituted the treachery of the Premier and the fraud on Earl Fitzwilliam. His Lordship's letters to Lord Carlisle cannot be abridged; every line is material; in those letters only can the deception practised on that nobleman be found with that weight and accuracy which so remarkable an incident in both English and Irish history requires.

In those letters will be found, as in a glare of light, on the one side, that high-minded, pure, virtuous dignity of mind and action, and on the other that intrepid, able, crafty, inflexible and unprincipled conduct which marked indelibly the characters of those remarkable personages.

Mr. Pitt having sent Lord Fitzwilliam to Ireland with unlimited powers to satisfy the nation, permitted him to proceed until he had unavoidably committed himself both to the Catholics and country, when he suddenly recalled him, leaving it in a state of excitation and dismay.

The day Lord Fitzwilliam arrived peace was proclaimed throughout all Ireland. The day he quitted it she prepared for insurrection.

The Beresfords and the Ponsonboys were arrayed against each other—and in one week more the Beresfords would have been prostrate. Mr. Pitt, however, terminated the question by dethroning Lord Fitzwilliam; the Whigs were defeated—and Ireland was surrendered at discretion to Lord Clare and his connection. Within three months after Lord Fitzwilliam's dismissal Lord Clare had got the nation into full training for *military execution*.

The arrival of Lord Camden to succeed Earl Fitzwilliam was attended by almost insurrectionary outrage. The Beresfords were the ostensible cause of the people's favorite being overthrown; on that family, therefore, they conceived they should signalize their vengeance, and their determination was nearly carried into execution.

The Chancellor, in his carriage, was assailed; he received a blow of a stone on his forehead which, thrown with some what more force, would have rid the people of their enemy. His house was attacked; the populace were determined to destroy him, and were proceeding to execute their intentions. At that moment their rage was, most fortunately, diverted by the address of his sister, Mrs. Jeffries, who, unknown and at a great risk, had mingled in the crowd; she misled them as to the place of his concealment. Disappointed of their object, they then attacked the Custom House, where Mr. Beresford, first commissioner of the revenue, resided. Dreadful results were with reason apprehended.

Such was the inauspicious beginning of Lord Camden's government. From the day of his arrival the spirit of insurrection increased, and in a short period during his Lordship's government more blood was shed, as much of outrage and cruelty was perpetrated on *both sides*, and as many military executions took place as in ten times the same period during the sanguinary reign of Elizabeth or the usurpations of Cromwell or King William.

The conspiracy of united Irishmen—never profoundly secret—soon became public, its members avowed themselves, but the extent of its objects was unknown, and its civil arrangements and military organization far exceeded those of any association in history. Constituents knew not their representatives, and the soldiers knew not the names of those by whom they were to be commanded. Even the members of their executive *Directory* were utterly unknown to some hun-

dred thousand men, who had sworn obedience to their orders. Mr. Pitt was surprised and found the conspiracy becoming rather too extensive and dangerous for his purposes; for a moment he felt he might possibly get beyond his depth, and he conceived the necessity of forcing a premature explosion, by which he might excite sufficient horrors throughout the country to serve his purpose, and be able to suppress the conspiracy in the bud, which might be beyond his power should it arrive at its maturity.

Individually Lord Camden was an excellent man, and in ordinary times would have been an acquisition to the country, but he was made a cruel instrument in the hands of Mr. Pitt, and seemed to have no will of his own.

Earl Camden was of a high mind and of unblemished reputation; his principles were good, but his talent was not eminent; he intended right, but was led wrong; he wished to govern with moderation, but was driven by his council into most violating proceedings; to the arrogant dictum of Lord Clare he had not a power of resistance, and he yielded to cruelties that his mind must have revolted at.

His Lordship became extremely popular among the armed associations which were raised in Ireland under the title of Yeomen. He was considered the guardian of that institution. He did what justice he was permitted to do, and a single false act of his *own* during his residence in Ireland was never complained of. His secretary, Earl Chichester (Mr. Pelham), held up the reputation of the Government to its proper standard. Without great talents, he had good sense, good manners, a frank address, with humane honorable, and just intentions, but, at a critical moment he was obliged to return to England for his health, and Lord Camden filled up the vacancy by his nephew. This relative became one of the most celebrated persons of the day, and is the principal hero in the sequel of Irish history, and in England proved himself a most destructive minister to the finances and character of the British Empire.

However, with all his good qualities as Viceroy, Lord Camden's government was by its consequences the most ruinous and most unfortunate that Ireland ever experienced.

Lord Clare and his connections, intoxicated by their victory over the late Viceroy, set no bounds to their triumph; they treated the people as their vassals, the country as their demesne, and its patronage as their private property.

On a review of the state of Ireland at that period it must be obvious to every deliberate observer that the design of Mr. Pitt to affect some mysterious measure in Ireland was now, through the unaccountable conduct of the Irish Government, beginning to develop itself. The seeds of insurrection which had manifested themselves in Scotland and in England were by the vigor and promptitude of the British Government, rapidly crushed, and by the reports of Parliament Lord Melville had obtained and published prints of the different pikes manufactured in Scotland long before that weapon had been manufactured by the Irish peasantry. But in Ireland, though it appeared from public documents that the Government had full and accurate information of the Irish United Societies, and that their leaders and chiefs were well known to the British Ministry at the same period and by the same means that England and Scotland were kept tranquil, so might have been Ireland.

Mr. Pitt, however, found he had temporized to the extremity of prudence; the disaffected had not yet appeared as a collected army, but a succession of partial outrages convinced him that prompt and decisive measures became absolutely indispensable. The Earl of Carhampton, Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, first expressed his dissatisfaction at Mr. Pitt's inexplicable proceedings. His Lordship had but little military experience, but he was a man of the world, of courage and decision, ardent and obstinate, he determined, right or wrong, to annihilate the conspiracy. Without the consent of the Irish Government, he commanded the troops that on all symptoms of insurrectionary movements they should act without waiting for the presence of any civil power. Martial law had not then been proclaimed. He went, therefore, a length which could not possibly be supported; his orders were countermanded by the Lord Lieutenant, but he refused to obey the Viceroy, under color that he had no rank in the army.

Lord Carhampton found that the troops in the garrison of Dublin were daily corrupted by the United Irishmen; he therefore withdrew them and formed two distinct camps on the north and south, some miles from the capital, and thereby, as he conceived, prevented all intercourse of the army with the disaffected of the metropolis. Both measures were disapproved of by the Lord Lieutenant, whom Lord Carhampton again refused to obey.

The King's sign manual was again procured, ordering him to break up his camps and bring back the garrison; this he obeyed, and marched the troops into Dublin barracks. He then resigned his command and publicly declared that some deep and insidious scheme of the Minister was in agitation, for, instead of suppressing, the Irish Government was obviously disposed to excite an insurrection.

Mr. Pitt counted on the expertness of the Irish Government to effect a premature explosion. Free Quarters were now ordered to irritate the Irish population; SLOW TORTURES were inflicted under the pretence of forcing confessions; the people were goaded and driven to madness.

General Abercromby, who succeeded as Commander-in-Chief, was not permitted to abate these enormities, and therefore resigned with disgust. Ireland was by these means reduced to a state of anarchy and exposed to crime and cruelties to which no nation had ever been subject. The people could no longer bear their miseries. Mr. Pitt's object was now affected, and an insurrection was excited.



Sculpture on Window Cathedral Church, Glendalough: Beranger, 1779.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers."





## CHAPTER XVII.

### CORNWALLIS LEADING THE UNION FORCES—FRENCH INVASION OF IRELAND—"THE RACES OF CASTLEBAR."

When the insurrection of 1798 had been nearly exhausted Lord Cornwallis was selected to complete the project of a union, and Lord Castlereagh was continued as Chief Secretary. His system was, of all others, the most artful and insidious; he affected impartiality, whilst he was deceiving both parties; he encouraged the United Irishman and he roused the royalist; one day he destroyed, the next day he was merciful. His system, however, had not exactly the anticipated effect. Everything gave reason to expect a restoration of tranquillity; it was through the impression of horror alone that a union could be effected, and he had no time to lose, lest the country might recover its reason.

A portion of an armament, destined by France to aid the Irish insurgents, had escaped our cruisers, and landed about a thousand troops at Killala Bay. They entered Killala without opposition, surprising the bishop and a company of parsons who were on their visitation. Nothing could be better than their conduct, and the bishop in a publication on this event did them ample justice, at the expense of his own translation.

They were joined by a considerable number of peasantry, unarmed, unclothed, and undisciplined. But the French did the best they could to render them efficient. After some stay at Killala they determined to march into the country, and even with that small force they expressed but little doubt of reaching the metropolis.

Lord Hutchinson commanded the garrison of Castlebar, a few miles from Killala. His force being pretty numerous, with a good train of artillery, he had no suspicion that a handful of French would presume to attack him.

General Lake, with his staff, had just arrived and taken the command (as an elder officer), as Lord Hutchinson had determined to march the ensuing day and end the question by a capture of the French detachment. The repose of the generals was of short duration. Early in the morning they were roused by an account that the French and peasantry were in

full march upon them. They immediately beat to arms and the troops were moved to a position about a mile from Castlebar, which to an unskilled person seemed unassailable. They had scarcely been posted, with nine pieces of cannon, when the French appeared on the opposite side of a small lake, descending a hill in columns, directly in front of the English. Our artillery played on them with effect. The French kept up a scattered fire of musketry and took up the attention of our army by irregular movements. In half an hour, however, our troops were alarmed by a movement of small bodies to turn to their left, which, being covered by walls, they had never apprehended. The orders given were either mistaken or misbelieved, the line wavered and in a few minutes the whole of the royal army was completely routed, the flight of the infantry was as that of a mob, all the royal artillery was taken, our army fled to Castlebar, the heavy cavalry galloped amongst the infantry and Lord Joycelyn's light dragoons, and made the best of their way, through thick and thin, to Castlebar and towards Tuam, pursued by such of the French as could get horses to carry them.

About nine hundred French and some peasants took possession of Castlebar without resistance, except from a few Highlanders stationed in the town, who were soon destroyed.

This battle has been generally called the Races of Castlebar. A considerable part of the Louth and Kilkenny regiments, not finding it convenient to retreat, thought the next best thing they could do would be to join the victors, which they immediately did, and in one hour were completely equipped as French riflemen. About ninety of those men were hanged by Lord Cornwallis afterwards at Ballynamuck. One of them defended himself by insisting "that it was the army and not he who were deserters; that whilst he was fighting hard they all ran away and left him to be murdered." Lord Jocelyn got him saved. The defeat of Castlebar, however, was a victory to the Viceroy; it revived all the horrors of the rebellion which had been subsiding, and the desertion of the militia regiments tended to impress the gentry with an idea that England alone could protect the country.

Lord Cornwallis was supine, and the insurgents were active in profiting by this victory; 40,000 of them were preparing to assemble at the Crooked Wood, in Westmeath, only 42 miles from Dublin, ready to join the French and march upon the metropolis.

The French continued too long at Castlebar, and Lord Cornwallis at length collected 20,000 troops with which he considered himself pretty certain of conquering 900 men. With above 20,000 men he marched directly to the Shannon to prevent their passage, but he was out-manœuvred; the insurgents had led the French to the source of the river and it was ten days before his Lordship, by the slowest possible marches (which he did purposely to increase the public terror), reached his enemy. But he overdid the matter, and had not Colonel Vecker (Lord Gort) delayed them in a rather sanguinary skirmish, in which he was defeated, it was possible that they might have slipped by his Lordship and have been revelling in Dublin, whilst he was roaming about the Shannon; however, he at length overtook the enemy. Lord Jocelyn's fox-hunters were determined to retrieve their character lost at Castlebar, and a squadron, led by his Lordship, made a bold charge upon the French; but the French opened, then closed on them, and they were beaten, and his Lordship was made prisoner.

The French corps, however, saw that ultimate success was impossible, having not more than nine hundred French troops, and they afterwards surrendered prisoners of war without further resistance, after having penetrated to the heart of the kingdom. They were sent to Dublin and afterwards to France.

Horrors now were everywhere recommenced; executions were multiplied. Lord Cornwallis marched against the peasantry, still masters of Killala; and after a sanguinary conflict in the streets, the town was taken; some were slaughtered, many hanged, and the whole district was on the point of being reduced to subjection, when Lord Cornwallis most unexpectedly proclaimed an armistice, and without any terms permitted the insurgents freely to disperse and gave them thirty days either to surrender their arms or be prepared for slaughter, leaving them to act as they thought proper in the interval. This interval was terrific to the loyalists; the thirty days of armistice were thirty days of new horror, and the Government had now achieved the very climax of public terror, on which they so much counted for inducing Ireland to throw herself into the arms of the protecting country. And the first step of Mr. Pitt's project was fully consummated.

Mr Pitt now conceived that the moment had arrived to try the effect of his previous measures to promote a legisla-

tive Union, and annihilate the Irish legislature. He conceived that he had already prepared inducements to suit every temper amongst the Irish Commons; in that he was partially mistaken. He believed that he had prepared the Irish Peers to accede to all his projects; in that he was successful.

The able, arrogant, ruthless bearing of Lord Clare upon the woolsack had rendered him almost despotic in that imbecile assembly; forgetting their high rank, their country and themselves, they yielded unresistingly to the spell of his dictation, and, as the fascinated bird, only watched his eye and dropped one by one into the power of the serpent.

The lure of translation neutralized the scruples of the Episcopacy. The Bishops yielded up their conscience to their interests, and but two of the spiritual Peers could be found to uphold the independence of their country, which had been so nobly attained and so corruptly extinguished. Marly, bishop of Waterford, and Dixon, bishop of Down, immortalized their name and their characters; they dared to oppose the dictator, and supported the rights of Ireland till she ceased to breathe longer under the title of a nation.

This measure, of more vital importance than any that has ever been enacted by the British legislature, the fatal consequences of which are every day displaying, and still range far beyond the vision of short-sighted statesmen, was first proposed indirectly by a speech from the throne on the 22d of January, 1799.

The insidious object of that speech to entrap the House into a conciliatory reply, was seen through, and resisted with a vigor which neither the English nor Irish governments had ever suspected. The horrors of civil war, the barbarities practised on the one side and sanctioned on the other, and the universal consternation of the whole kingdom—and, fortunately for Mr. Pitt—excited in many the fallacious idea that in the arms of England only Ireland could regain and secure tranquillity.

This shallow principle influenced or deluded many, but afforded to a greater number a specious pretence for supporting a measure which their individual or corrupt objects only induced them to sanction.

To do justice or to detail the speeches on this great subject, comprising as much eloquence as ever yet appeared in any legislative assembly, would be far too extensive a task



for this volume. Short abstracts only can now be given here, and the leading arguments condensed, so as to bring the object in all its important bearings before the capacity of every reader.

Ireland was now reduced to a state fitted to receive propositions for a Union. The loyalists were still struggling through the embers of a rebellion, scarcely extinguished by the torrents of blood which had been poured upon them; the insurgents were artfully distracted between the hopes of mercy and the fears of punishment; the Viceroy had seduced the Catholics by delusive hopes of emancipation, whilst the Protestants were equally assured of their ascendancy, and every encouragement was held out to the sectarians. Lord Cornwallis and Lord Castlereagh seemed to have been created for such a crisis and for each other. An unremitting perseverance, an absence of all political compunctions, an unqualified contempt of public opinion, and a disregard of every constitutional principle were common to both. They held that "the object justifies the means;" and, unfortunately, their private characters were calculated to screen their public conduct from popular suspicion.

Lord Cornwallis, with the exception of the Union, which renders him the most prominent person in Irish history, had never succeeded in any of his public measures. His failure in America had deprived England of her colonies, and her army of its reputation, his catastrophe at Yorktown gave a shock to the King's mind from which, it is supposed, he never entirely recovered. In India he defeated Tippo Saib, but concluded a peace which only increased the necessity of future wars. Weary of the sword, he was sent as a diplomatist to conclude the peace of Amiens; but, outmanœuvred by Lucien Buonaparte, his Lordship's treaty involved all Europe in a war against England. He had thought to conciliate Lucien by complimenting the First Consul, and sacrificed his sovereign's honorary title as King of France, which had been borne since the conquest of the Edwards and the Henrys, while he retained the title of Defender of the Faith, corruptly bestowed by the pope on a tyrant. This was the instrument now employed by Mr. Pitt to effect the Union.

Lord Castlereagh had been more than seven years in the Irish Parliament, but was undistinguished. In private life his honorable conduct, gentlemanly habits and engaging de-

meanor were exemplary. Of his public life, the commencement was patriotic, the progress corrupt, and the termination criminal. His first public essay was a motion to reform the Irish Parliament, and his last to annihilate it. It is impossible to deny a fact so notorious. History, tradition, or the fictions of romance contain no instance of any minister who so fearlessly deviated from all the principles which ought to characterize the servant of a constitutional monarch or the citizen of a free country. Incontestible facts prove the justice of this observation.

The rebellion had commenced on the 23d of May 1798, and on the 22d of January, 1799, a union was proposed. The commercial propositions had taught Mr Pitt that, in a period of tranquillity nothing could be effected with the Irish Parliament by fraud or delusion. But for the terrors of the rebellion the proposal of a union might have united all parties against the Government, and Lord Cornwallis's unexampled warfare against nine hundred Frenchmen was evidently intended more for terror than for victory.

Mr. Pitt's project was first decidedly announced by a pamphlet written by Mr. Edward Cooke, the Under-Secretary, entitled "Arguments for and against a Union considered." It was plausibly written, and it roused the people from their confidence that no English minister dared propose, or Irishman abet, a destruction of that independence which Ireland had possessed less than eighteen years. Mr. Cooke was promptly replied to by a pamphlet entitled "Cease Your Funning," a masterpiece of its kind, which, in the garb of wit and irony, conveyed the most skillful reasoning and rendered Mr. Cooke's publication perfectly ridiculous. The author was then deservedly high at the Irish bar, and is now its first law dignitary. It was sent to press five days after the first line was written. Above a hundred pamphlets were published on both sides of the question, but it was some time before the whole nation could believe such a measure dare be attempted.

The bar in Ireland was formerly not a working trade, but a proud profession, filled by gentlemen of birth and fortune, who were then residents in their country. The Government, the Parliament, every municipality then felt the influence of that profession, whose principal pride it always was to defend the Constitution. The number of offices connected with the

law were then comparatively few. The estimable Lord Lifford, at his death, was succeeded on the woolsack by Lord Clare, who immediately gave the utmost latitude to his arbitrary temper and despotic principles as Chancellor.

He commenced his office with a splendor far exceeding all precedent. He expended four thousand guineas for a state carriage; his establishment was splendid, and his entertainments magnificent. His family connections absorbed the patronage of the State, and he became the most absolute subject that modern times had seen in the British islands. His only check was the bar, which he resolved to corrupt. He doubled the number of the bankrupt commissioners; he revived some offices, created others, and, under the pretence of furnishing each county with a local judge, in two months he established thirty-two new offices of about six or seven hundred pounds per annum each. His arrogance in court intimidated many whom his patronage could not corrupt, and he had no doubt of overpowering the whole profession.

A meeting of the Bar, however, to discuss the Union, was called on the 9th of December, 1799, at the Exhibition Room, William Street, and Mr. Smith, as the father of the Bar, was voted in the chair. Among those who had called the meeting were fourteen of the King's counsel—E. Mayne, W. Saurin, W. C. Plunket, C. Bushe, W. Sankey, B. Burton, J. Barrington, A. McCartney, G. O'Farrell, J. O'Driscoll, J. Lloyd, P. Burrowes, R. Jobb and H. Joy, Esquires.

M. Saurin opened the debate. His speech was vapid and his resolution unpointed, but he had great influence in his profession. He was a moderate Huguenot and grandson of the great preacher at the Hague, he was an excellent lawyer and an amiable, pious Christian. He was followed by Captain Spencer, of the barristers' cavalry.

Mr. Saint George Daly, a briefless barrister, was the first supporter of the Union. Of all men he was the least thought of for preferment; but it was wittily observed "that the Union was the first brief Mr. Daly had spoken from." He moved an adjournment.

Mr. Thomas Grady was the Fitzgibbon spokesman—a gentleman of independent property, a tolerable lawyer, an amatory poet, a severe satirist, and an indefatigable quality-hunter. He had written the "*Flesh Brush*," for Lady Clare; the "*West Briton*," for the Union; the "*Barrister*," for the

bar, and the "Nosegay," for a banker at Limerick, who sued him successfully for a libel.

"The Irish," said Mr. Grady, "are only the *rump of an aristocracy*. Shall I visit posterity with a system of *war, pestilence and famine*? No! no! Give me a Union. Unite me to that country where all is peace, and order, and prosperity. Without a Union we shall see embryo chief-judges, attorneys general in perspective, and *animalcula serjeants*. All the cities of the south and west are on the Atlantic Ocean, between the rest of the world and Great Britain; they are all for it, they must all become warehouses; the people are Catholics, and they are all for it." Such an oration as Mr. Grady's had never before been heard at a meeting of lawyers of Europe.

Mr. John Beresford, Lord Clare's nephew and purse-bearer, followed, as if for the charitable purpose of taking the laugh from Mr. Grady, in which he perfectly succeeded by turning it on himself. Mr. Beresford afterwards became a parson, and is now Lord Deeries.

Mr. Goold said: "There are 40,000 British troops in Ireland, and with 40,000 bayonets at my breast, the minister shall not plant another Sicily in the bosom of the Atlantic. I want not the assistance of divine inspiration to foretell, for I am enabled by the visible and unerring demonstrations of nature to assert that Ireland was destined to be a free and independent nation. Our patent to be a state, not a shire, comes direct from heaven. The Almighty has, in majestic characters, signed the great charter of our independence. The great Creator of the world has given our beloved country the gigantic outlines of a kingdom. The God of nature never intended that Ireland should be a province, and, *by G—, she never shall.*"

The assembly burst into a tumult of applause; a repetition of the words came from many mouths, and many an able lawyer swore hard upon the subject. The division was:

Against the Union	166
In favor of it	32
	—
Majority	134

Soon after this decision Sir Jonah Barrington resigned his commission as an officer of the Barristers' Cavalry, and the corps shortly after ceased to act.



"Letter from Sir Jonah Barrington to Captain Saurin, Barristers' Cavalry:

"Merion Square, Jan. 20th, 1799.

"Permit me to resign, through you, the commission which I hold in the Lawyers' Cavalry; I resign it with the regret of a soldier who knows his duty to his King, yet feels his duty to his country, and will depart from neither but with his life.

"That blind and fatal measure proposed by the Irish Government to extinguish the political existence of Ireland, to surrender its legislature, its trade, its dearest rights and proudest prerogatives into the hands of a British minister and a British council savors too much of that foreign principle against the prevailing influence of which the united powers of Great Britain and Ireland are at this moment combatting, and as evidently throws open to the British Empire the gate of that seductive political innovation which has already proved the grave of half the governments of Europe.

"Consistent, therefore, with my loyalty and my oath, I can no longer continue subject to the indefinite and unforeseen commands of a military government which so madly hazards the integrity of the British Empire and existence of the British Constitution to crush a rising nation and aggrandize a despotic minister.

"Blinded by my zealous and hereditary attachment to the established government and British connection, I saw not the absolute necessity of national unanimity to secure constitutional freedom, I see it now, and trust it is not yet too late to establish both.

"I never will abet a new developed system, treacherous and ungrateful, stimulating two sects against each other, to enfeeble both, and then making religious feuds a pretext for political slavery.

"Rejecting the experiment of a reform and recommending the experiment of a revolution.

"Kindling Catholic expectation to a blaze and then extinguishing it forever.

"Alternately disgusting the rebel and the royalist by indiscriminate pardon and indiscriminate punishment.

"Suspending one code of laws and adjudging by another without authority to do either; and when the country, wearied by her struggles for her King, slumbers to refresh and regain



her vigor, her liberty is treacherously attempted to be bound, and her pride, her security and her independence are to be buried alive in the tomb of national annihilation

"Mechanical obedience is the duty of a soldier, but active, uninfluenced integrity, the indispensable attribute of a legislator when the preservation of his country is in question, and as the same frantic authority which meditates our civil annihilation might in the same frenzy meditate military projects from which my feelings, my principles, and my honor might revolt, I feel it right to separate my civil and military functions, and, to secure the honest, uninterrupted exercise of the one, I relinquish the indefinite subjection of the other

"I return the arms I received from the Government, I received them pure and restore them not dishonored.

"I shall now resume my civil duties with zeal and with energy, elevated by the hope that the Irish Parliament, true to itself and honest to its country, will never assume a power extrinsic of its delegation, and will convince the British nation that we are a people equally impregnable to the attacks of intimidation or the shameless practice of corruption

"Yours,

JONAH BARRINGTON,

*"Lieutenant L. Cavalry."*

The Right Honorable James Fitzgerald, then prime-sergeant, was dismissed from office, having peremptorily refused to vote for the Union. The office of prime-sergeant, unknown in England, in Ireland took precedence of the Attorney and Solicitor General. The emoluments were very great; Mr. Saint George Daly was immediately rewarded by that office, to the duties of which he was totally incompetent, never having been in any considerable practice at the bar

A meeting was then called to express to Mr. Fitzgerald the thanks of his profession for his disinterested patriotism; never was there a more just and honorable tribute paid to an honest public character

The bar had also determined that the precedence in the courts should be continued by Mr. Fitzgerald; to this Lord Clare would not accede, and he treated the subject with great arrogance in his court. That session concluded without any other meeting of the profession

The day after that debate Mr. Saint George Daly drew up a protest of the minority, some of whom refused to sign

it; he got some substitutes, so as to keep up his number of thirty-two, but not one person of professional eminence, of public character or independence appeared in the whole number; it was universally ridiculed, but Mr. Daly carried his object, his own promotion.

Five of the debates on the Union in the Irish Commons comprised everything of the first importance upon the subject; of these, three took place in January, 1799, whilst men were impressed with the horrors of the rebellion and the fears of a French invasion. The debates of 1800 were after the Parliament had been packed through the Place Bill. The competence of Parliament to relinquish the Constitution and their own existence was discussed with extraordinary ability.

The first debate took place on the 22d of January, 1799, and lasted till eleven o'clock in the morning of the 23d, or twenty-two hours. The Government obtained a majority of only one, and that by the palpable seduction of Mr. Fox. The second debate commenced at five o'clock on the same day and continued till late in the morning of the 24th, when, the country being roused, the Treasury Bench was unexpectedly defeated.

The speech from the Viceroy, delivered on the opening of the session, which gave rise to the debate of the 22d of January, recommended "the unremitting industry with which our enemies persevere in their avowed design of endeavoring to effect a separation of this kingdom from Great Britain must have engaged your particular attention, and His Majesty commands me to express his anxious hope that this consideration, joined to the sentiment of mutual affection and common interest, may dispose the Parliaments in both kingdoms to provide the most effectual means of maintaining a connection essential to their common security, and of consolidating as far as possible into one firm and lasting fabric the strength, the power and the resources of the British Empire." The address to that speech, almost an echo, was moved by Lord Tyrone, who thus stamped for himself an eternal impression on the annals of Ireland. He was the eldest son of the Marquis of Waterford, a keen and haughty nobleman, possessed of that local influence which rank, extensive connections, unlimited patronage and ostentatious establishments are almost certain to acquire, inflated with aristocratic pride and blinded by egotism, he became a powerful instru-

ment of Lord Clare's ambition, whilst he conceived that he was only gratifying his own Lord Clare, at that period, had covered the surface of the nation with the partisans of the Beresfords and himself, and no family ever possessed so many high and lucrative employments; they had no talent, no public services, no political honesty, which should have entitled them to the authority they exercised over their sovereign and country.

Lord Tyrone, an automaton of Lord Clare, possessed plain manners, an open countenance, a slothful, uncultivated mind, unsusceptible of any refined impressions or patriotic feelings; the example of his relatives gave him no stimulus beyond that of lucrative patronage. Whatever were his individual opinions upon the Union, his vapid, disingenuous and arrogant speech evinced that he was not calculated to give weight to his family, his speech had been written by his friends, and, concealing it in the crown of his hat, he took a glance at it when at a loss; the exhibition, on such a subject, was too disgusting to be ridiculous. Lord Clare, on this occasion, exhibited the voracity of his ambition. The ancient and proud house of Beresford was, on that night, cringing as the vassals of an arrogant and splendid upstart.

The address was seconded by Mr. Robert Fitzgerald, of Corkbeg, an elderly country gentleman; he had an honest character, blunt, candid manners, and though he had no talent, he could deliver himself with some strength and with the appearance of sincerity. His speech on this occasion was short and feeble. He had been artfully seduced as a lure to the country gentlemen by Lord Cornwallis's assuring him that, in the event of the Union, a royal dock-yard would be built near Cork, which would double the value of his estates.

In every debate upon that measure it was insisted that the Parliament was incompetent, even to entertain the question of the Union; such was the opinion of Mr Saurin, since Attorney General; Mr Plunket, since Lord Chancellor; Serjeant Ball, the ablest lawyer of Ireland; Mr, Fitzgerald, Prime-Serjeant of Ireland, Mr. Moore, since a judge, Sir John Parnell, then Chancellor of the Exchequer; Mr. Bushe, since Chief Justice, and Lord Oriel, the then speaker of the House of Commons. Nearly every unbribed or uninfluenced member of the learned profession adopted the doctrine of which these learned and able men were the unqualified or-

gans. Lord Glenbervie, in his famous speech in favor of the Union, in the English House of Commons, in 1800, expressed his surprise that Messrs. Saurin, Plunket and Barrington could reason upon such an untenable position. He admitted their sincerity, but considered them not quite clear in their intellects. His own speech was splendidly written, but was miserably heavy. The Irish Union materially changed the representation of England, and altered the letter and spirit of the Scotch treaty; Ireland, however, was alone disfranchised.

Mr. John Ball, Member for Drohega, who gave his unqualified opinion as to the legal and constitutional incapacity of the Commons to enact the Union, was the ablest lawyer of his day, and one of the purest characters, public and private, that had ever flourished in Ireland; amiable and consistent in every station and in every capacity, combining spirit and mildness, fortitude and moderation, he was cast in one of the finest molds of firmness and patriotism. During his progress from comparative obscurity to the attachment and highest esteem of his profession and of the public, he evinced an independence above all temptation. Though the ablest lawyer of his day, he was passed over in all Lord Clare's promotions.



Sculpture on a Capital. Priest's House, Glendalough; Beranger, 1779.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers."





## CHAPTER XVIII.

### ARGUMENTS IN PARLIAMENT FOR THE UNION—VIOLENT SPEECH BY LORD CASTLEREAGH—PATRIOTISM OF SIR JOHN PARNELL.

It would be impossible to do justice to the brilliant eloquence and unanswerable reasoning by which this measure was combatted. Even a short abstract of the speeches delivered on that momentous question would swell this volume beyond its intended limits. At present it must suffice to state the abstract points on which the arguments of Government for annexation were founded and those by which they were so ably and unanswerably refuted. First, the distracted state of the Irish Nation, its religious dissensions and the consequent danger of a separation, unless protected from so imminent a peril by the incorporation with Great Britain, and the incapacity of the Irish legislature alone to avert the dangers of the country and preserve the constitution. Secondly, the great commercial advantages of a Union which must eventually enrich Ireland by an extension of its commerce, the influx of British capital and the confidence of England in the stability of its institutions when guaranteed by the Union. Thirdly, the Government pressed with great zeal the example of Scotland, which had so improved and become so rich and prosperous after its annexation, a precedent which must convince the Irish of the incalculable advantages which must ensue from a similar incorporation.

Many other arguments, but of a minor description, were urged by the purchased partisans of the Government. But the leading points which elicited the splendid eloquence, the reasoning and the high spirits of its opponents, were exemplified by the argument of Mr George Ponsonby.

Sir Lawrence Parsons and many others, in reply, not only animated but convinced the assembly; the facts were too strong to be refuted that the country had been worked up by the English minister to terrify the Irish gentry into a re-submission to those shackles from which the spirit of the Volunteers and of the nation had but a few years before released them. They asked, what could the Union do which could not be done without it?

There was no species of aid, no auxiliary power which England could afford to give Ireland, either to restore or secure her tranquillity, that Ireland had not fully within her own reach and power. She had men, she had means, she had arms, she had spirit, she had loyalty, all in her domestic circle, sufficient to restore her to peace, which had for a moment been interrupted by the machinations of those who would now take advantage of their own treachery. The Irish Parliament had within her own walls the power of reconciling religious differences, restoring peace or putting down insurrection, far more effectually than the English Government could pretend to possess.

It was argued that the insurrection, first organized and fostered by Mr. Pitt, and protracted by Lord Cornwallis, had been suppressed by the active zeal and measures of the Irish Parliament; and that the introduction of foreign and mercenary Germans, to immolate the Irish, instead of tending to extinguish, added fuel to the conflagration and excited the strongest feelings of retaliation; nor could the people of independent Ireland brook the idea of being cut down by the Welshmen.

It was not to the arms of England, but to the distinguished loyalty of the Irish Commons and the prompt and vigorous measures of the Irish Parliament, that the speedy termination of that insurrection was to be attributed. The English militia were brought over, after the contest had nearly ended, and never fired a shot in Ireland. They conducted themselves with decorum and due discipline, and returned to England with at least as good character as they left it. The German mercenaries who were wantonly imported, as if to teach barbarity to the Irish insurgents, amply experienced by their own blood the expertness of their pupils, and only aggravated that people whom they had been brought to conquer.

The argument, therefore, that the Irish legislature had not sufficient power to protect itself was unfounded and fallacious, and only invented to keep up and augment the terrors of the Irish gentry.

The second ground of argument used by the supporters of the Union, great commercial advantages, appeared still more fallacious; its deception was too palpable to deceive the most ignorant of the people.

The proposers of the Union were asked what were the commercial advantages which Ireland could possibly gain by

a Union that she might not equally attain through her own Parliament without one. She was an independent nation, she had an independent legislature, she might regulate her own tariffs and conduct her commerce by her own statutes; the reciprocal connection of the two countries was an equal object to the commercial interests of both.

The non-importation and non-consumption resolutions of Ireland had once brought back the English monopolists to their reason; the same power remained to the Irish people. If she could resist commercial restraints in 1782, with tenfold more facility, she could resist them in 1800; she could trade with more success, because she had since learned the rudiments of commerce from a participation in which the avarice of monopolists and the unjust jealousies of Great Britain had theretofore excluded her.

The crafty prediction that English capital would flow into Ireland when a Union was effected was a visionary deception. For more capital would be annually withdrawn from Ireland by the emigration of the landed proprietors in consequence of the Union than could be gained by any accession of British capital. Ireland was an agricultural country; her natural fertility pointed out to her the true source of her internal employment and proper subjects of her external commerce, and when the famine which the slightest stagnation of trade causes amongst the manufacturers of the first towns of England, the decrepitude of their meagre operatives, the wretched enervating slavery to which the necessity of the parents and the brutality of the manufacturer condemn the infants of that nation, are considered, it would make a sufficient reply to either the certainty or the consequence of British capital.

The third and most deceptive argument of the Union supporters because the most plausible, was the precedent of Scotland and the great advantages derived by her in consequence of her Union.

Of all the false reasoning, misstated facts, fallacious premises and unfounded conclusions that any position ever was attempted to be supported on, the arguments founded on the Scottish precedent were the most erroneous, and no deception ever was more completely and fully detected than by the speeches made in the Irish Parliament in 1799 and 1800, and by several able pamphlets which at that period flowed in full tide upon the public.

These replies being founded on matters of fact and attested by incontrovertible records, put at once a decisive conclusion to every argument deduced by the advocates of Union from that subject

First, as to matter of fact, Scotland and Ireland, in their relations with England, stood on grounds diametrically opposite to each other on every point that could warrant a Union on the one side or reject it on the other.

Scotland and England forming only one island, divided by a frontier many parts of which a man could step over, had ever been in a state of sanguinary warfare. The facility of invasion on both sides left no moment of a certain undisturbed tranquillity to either. Their inroads were incessant, their reconciliations only the forerunner of new contests, interrupted by short intervals of peace until the accession of Mary. She had been Queen of France, and on her return to her native country introduced a French connection with Scotland, which added to the excitement of both nations, and naturally increased the apprehensions of England from the power of a neighbor so supported as Scotland then must have been

The two crowns were united in the person of James the First, and in the reign of Charles the Scottish army renounced their allegiance and sold their King and surrendered him to his enemies, and eventually to the executioner. It was considered by King William III. when he usurped the British throne that if they so acted by one King they might do so by another, and his sanguinary conduct towards that country still widened the breach between the two nations. At length the reign of Anne brought the question of Union forward, not as in Ireland, a mere voluntary discussion, but one of absolute necessity.

Had Anne died childless the crowns must have been severed, and that old Scotland, by descent, would have gone to the Scottish Duke of Hamilton, as Hanover was, on the demise of his late Majesty, separated from England. This important fact puts an end to all comparison between the relative state of the two countries.

The Scottish Parliament, to put an end to all doubts on the subject of separation, passed an act entitled the Act of Security. By that statute the Scottish Parliament enacted that the crown of Scotland should never be worn by the same



monarch as that of England. By the Irish parliament it was enacted that the two crowns should "ever" be worn by the same monarch and never disunite.

Thus it incontestibly appears by an act of Scotland herself that without a Scottish Union England and Scotland, though on the same island, must in a short space of time have been constitutionally severed and governed by different and distinct monarchs forever, whereas Ireland, though a different and distinct island, with a great intervening sea, had decided the very reverse, and had united herself indissolubly and voluntarily to England by a mutual federative compact, both crowns to be forever worn by the same monarch.

How the supporters of the Irish Union, therefore, could have the face to call in the Scottish Union as a precedent to show the necessity of an Irish Union can only be accounted for by that voluntary blindness and premeditated absence of all candor and liberality which are the inseparable companions of political delinquency.

But, in fact, the supporters of an Irish Union were themselves the greatest enemies to British connection, for this clear and obvious reason: the Scottish Union was a matter of state necessity; the connection of England and Ireland a mutual international compact, and as such equally binding, sacred and inviolable on both sides, and as the principle of all international as well as individual contracts, is binding just so long as the mutual compacts are adhered to. Such a mutual, sacred, and international compact, voluntarily, constitutionally and legally guaranteed by both legislatures, confirmed by the King of both countries in his double capacity, and touched by his sceptre, had been enacted and did exist between England and Ireland long previous to the measure of a Union, so pressed on Ireland by England; such a Union was therefore a direct unequivocal infraction of that international treaty and federative compact, the mutual and inviolable adherence to which, in all its provisions, was the only valuable consideration to Ireland.

It was truly argued that in this point of view, therefore, no similarity existed between the position of Scotland and Ireland, when the Irish nobles were cashiered of their hereditary honor and the Irish people plundered of two-thirds of their constitutional representation.

Another fact stated and most ably reasoned on during the Irish Union to prove the absurdity of the attempted com-



parison was that the Scottish and Irish Parliaments, at that period, had in their organization and proceedings no similitude whatsoever; the Lords and Commons of Scotland formed but one chamber, the representatives of the people (such as they were) and the Peers called the hereditary counsellors of the crown sat mingled and voted together promiscuously; nothing like the British constitution even in theory existed in Scotland; church, state and legislation had no analogy; materials of legislation and a species of imperium in imperio, entirely inconsistent with the constitution of the superior nation, could not continue to exist in the same island without the daily probability of collision and the danger of hostilities, aided by the facility of invasion by either country; this condition imperatively required some means to avert so probable and imminent a danger to both countries.

No such dangers, however, existed as to Ireland; and if she had not been politically excited by the British minister, and by the example of England and Scotland, or even after that excitement had subsided, and put an end to, had she been permitted to rest, and regain her tranquillity and vigor, and proper measures had been then adopted to continue that tranquillity, no country on earth had more capabilities, and no country in Europe would have been more prosperous, tranquil, and happy than misgoverned Ireland.

The grand and fundamental point which was then urged, reasoned upon, and which never has, and never can be refuted, was the incompetence of Parliament to betray its trust. Whilst the first elements of the British constitution exist, that principle is its surest protection; the entire incompetence of representatives elected by the people, as their delegated trustees, to represent them in the great national inquest, and as such trustees and guardians to preserve the rights and constitution so entrusted to them inviolate; and at the expiration of the term of that trust, deliver back their trust to their constituents as they received it, to be replaced in their own hands, or of other trustees for another term. But they had, and could have no power to betray their trust, convert it to their own corrupt purposes, or transfer the most valuable of all funds, an independent constitution, the integrity of which they became trustees solely for the purpose of protecting.

This being a fundamental principle of British law, is placed under the protection of the Judges, and the very

essence, first principle and element of British equity is placed under the protection of the Chancellor. That high functionary, in his double capacity, of the first judge of the country, and also the adviser of the King in all cases within his jurisdiction, is bound to support by authorities that principle which forms the only safeguard to the British Constitution.

Many of the ablest lawyers of 1799 and 1800, justly estimated for their deep knowledge, great talents, and incorruptible integrity, gave both in and out of Parliament unqualified and decided opinions which are too important not to be recorded; they entirely denied the competence of the Irish Commons, to pass or to even receive any act of Union extinguishing their own existence and betraying the trusts they were delegated to protect. When the names of Saurin, Ponsonby, Plunket, Ball, Bushe, Curran, Burrowes, Fitzgerald, A. Moore, etc., are found supporting that doctrine by their learning, their public character, and their legal reputation; and such men as Grattan, Parsons, Forbes, Parnell, O'Hara, etc., etc., united with Corry, Clements, Caulfield, Cole, Kingsborough, etc., and the flower of the young Irish nobles, in the Commons House of Parliament; it is impossible not to accede to a doctrine, supported by every principle of law, equity, and constitution.

This great fact, therefore (and the irrefragable authorities on which it rests are repeated, and spread over many parts of this history), necessarily produces a deduction more intrinsically important, and involving more grave considerations, than any other that can arise upon this subject. From these principles it follows as a corollary that the Act of Union carried by such means was in itself a nullity, and a fraud upon the then existing constitution; and if a nullity in 1800, it is incontrovertible that nothing afterwards did, or possibly could, validate it in 1833.

No temporary assent, or in this case submission, could be deduced as an argument; no lapse of time, unless by prescription (beyond which the memory of man runneth not), can ever establish any Act originally illegal; no limitation through lapse of time can bar the rights and claims of the crown; there is no limitation, through lapse of time, to the church; no limitation, through lapse of time, can bar the chartered rights of even a petty corporation; and no lapse of time can legalize any act hostile to the rights of a free

people, or extinguish the legislature of an independent nation. In that point of view, therefore, no legislative union ever was constitutionally enacted between the two countries.

But considering that question in another point of view, it is the invariable principle of all international law that the infraction of a solemn treaty, on the one side, dispenses with any adherence to the same treaty by the other, of course annuls both, and leaves the contracting parties in statu quo, as they respectively stood before the treaty, and it was therefore argued by those able men, that the renunciation act of the 23d George III, "recognizing the unqualified independence of Ireland, and expressly stipulating and contracting that it should endure forever," was the very essence, and consideration of the international and federative treaty, and through its infraction by England, both countries stood in the very same state as at the period when England repealed her own statute of George I, and admitted its unconstitutionality, and her own usurpation, Ireland, of course, remained in the same position as she stood at that period.

From all these considerations it inevitably follows that if through force, or fraud, or fear, or corruption, in enacting it, the Union was null, then any act of the Imperial Parliament, repealing the Act of Union, would be in fact only repealing a nullity, and restoring to Ireland a legislature she had never been constitutionally deprived of. It was admitted that, had the infraction of the federative treaty been the act of Ireland, then this reasoning would have lost its validity; but the contrary is direct and indisputable.

These arguments, and many more, were used both in and out of Parliament to arrest the progress of that destructive and faithless measure, but in vain, however, two great events, so long and so violently resisted for more than a century, have lately been accomplished, which give rise to constitutional questions, and have materially changed the state both of the people and the legislature, roused Ireland from her torpor, and brought forward claims which had so long lain dormant. And it is by the late measures of England herself, that the Irish people have been led to consider that the nation was only in a slumber, and her legislature only in abeyance.

These grave and embarrassing points of constitutional law were by various speeches and pamphlets combated by Mr. William Smith, who lent the whole power of his able and

indefatigable genius to prove the omnipotence of Parliament, and combat all the reasoning of those distinguished men who have been heretofore alluded to; particularly Mr. Foster, against whose doctrine he wrote a long and labored pamphlet.

Baron Smith's ideas and reasoning are so metaphysically plaited and interwoven that facts are lost sight of in the multiplicity and minuteness of theories and distinctions, and ordinary auditors, after a most learned, eloquent, and argumentative charge or argument, are seldom able to recollect a single sentence of either (the dogmas excepted), after they are out of the Court House. In all his arguments as to the omnipotence of the Irish Parliament to surrender its legislature, he manufactures his theories, as if the Irish Commons submitted willingly to prostitutions, and argued in principle that if members were purchased it was a market overt, and that the unconstitutionality of the sale merged in the omnipotent majority of the purchaser.

It is to be regretted that the learned Baron, who is always able, and frequently four days in the week patriotic; should in 1800 have accepted a seat on the bench as a premium for his share of the omnipotency. The English people would have considered the Baron's reasoning, for the extinction of the Irish Parliament, in a very different point of view if it had been used by him to prove the expediency of removing the British Parliament to legislate in Dublin.

A very remarkable incident during the first night's debate occurred in the conduct of Mr. Luke Fox and Mr. Trench, of Woodlawn, afterwards created Lord Ashdown. These were the most palpable, undisguised acts of public tergiversation and seduction ever exhibited in a popular assembly. They afterwards became the subject of many speeches and of many publications; and their consequences turned the majority of one in favor of the Minister.

It was suspected that Mr. Trench had been long in negotiation with Lord Castlereagh, but it did not in the early part of that night appear to have been brought to any conclusion, his conditions were supposed to be too extravagant. Mr. Trench, after some preliminary observations, declared, in a speech, that he would vote against the Minister and support Mr. Ponsonby's amendment. This appeared a stunning blow to Mr. Cooke, who had been previously in conversation with Mr. Trench. He was immediately observed sidling from his



seat nearer to Lord Castlereagh. They whispered earnestly, and, as if restless and undecided, both looked wistfully towards Mr. Trench. At length the matter seemed to be determined upon. Mr. Cooke retired to a back seat, and was obviously endeavouring to count the house, probably to guess if they could that night dispense with Mr. Trench's services. He returned to Lord Castlereagh; they whispered, again looked most affectionately at Mr. Trench, who seemed unconsciously that he was the subject of their consideration. But there was no time to lose, the question was approaching, all shame was banished, they decided on terms, and a significant and certain glance, obvious to everybody, convinced Mr. Trench that his conditions were agreed to. Mr. Cooke then went and sat down by his side; an earnest but very short conversation took place; a parting smile completely told the house that Mr. Trench was that moment satisfied. These surmises were soon verified. Mr. Cooke went back to Lord Castlereagh, a congratulatory nod announced his satisfaction. But could any man for one moment suppose that a member of Parliament, a man of very large fortune, of respectable family, and good character, could be publicly, and without shame or compunction, actually seduced by Lord Castlereagh, in the very body of the house, and under the eye of two hundred and twenty gentlemen? Yet this was the fact. In a few minutes Mr. Trench rose to apologize for having indiscreetly declared he would support the amendment. He added that he had thought better of the subject since he had unguardedly expressed himself; that he had been convinced he was wrong, and would support the Minister.

Scarcely was there a member of any party who was not disgusted; it had, however, the effect intended by the desperate purchaser of proving that Ministers would stop at nothing to effect their objects, however shameless or corrupt. This purchase of Mr. Trench had a much more fatal effect upon the destinies of Ireland. His change of sides, and the majority of one to which it contributed, were probably the remote causes of persevering in a Union. Mr. Trench's venality excited indignation in every friend of Ireland.

Another circumstance that night proved by what means Lord Castlereagh's majority of even one was acquired.

The Place Bill, so long and so pertinaciously sought for, and so indiscreetly framed by Mr. Grattan and the Whigs of



Ireland, now, for the first time, proved the very engine by which the Minister upset the opposition and annihilated the Constitution.

That bill enacted that members accepting offices, places, or pensions during the pleasure of the Crown, should not sit in Parliament unless re-elected; but, unfortunately, the bill made no distinction between valuable offices which might influence, and nominal offices which might job, and the Chiltern Hundreds of England were, under the title of the Escheatorships of Munster, Leinster, Connaught, etc., transferred to Ireland, with salaries of forty shillings, to be used at pleasure by the Secretary. Occasional and temporary seats were thus bartered for by Government, and by the ensuing session made the complete and fatal instrument of packing the Parliament and effecting a Union.

Mr. Luke Fox, a barrister of very humble origin, of vulgar manners and of a coarse, harsh appearance, was endued with a clear, strong, and acute mind, and was possessed of much cunning. He had acquired very considerable legal information, and was an obstinate and persevering advocate; he had been the usher of a school, and a sizer in Dublin University; but neither politics nor belles-lettres were his pursuit. On acquiring eminence at the bar, he married an obscure niece of the Earl of Ely's; he had originally professed what was called whiggism, merely, as people supposed, because his name was Fox. His progress was impeded by no political principles, but he kept his own secrets well, and being a man of no importance, it was perfectly indifferent to everybody what side he took. Lord Ely, perceiving he was manageable, returned him to Parliament as one of his autocrats; and Mr. Fox played his part very much to the satisfaction of his manager.

When the Union was announced, Lord Ely had not made his terms, and remained long in abeyance; and as his Lordship had not issued his orders to Mr. Fox, he was very unwilling to commit himself until he could dive deeper into probabilities; but rather believing the opposition would have the majority, he remained in the body of the House with the Anti-Unionists, when the division took place. The doors were scarcely locked when he became alarmed and slunk, unperceived, into one of the dark corridors, where he concealed himself; he was, however, discovered and the sergeant-at-

aims was ordered to bring him forth to be counted amongst the Anti-Unionists; his confusion was very great, and he seemed at his wit's end; at length he declared he had taken advantage of the Place Bill, and actually accepted the Escheatorship of Munster, and had thereby vacated his seat and could not vote.

The fact was doubted, but, after much discussion, his excuse, upon his honor, was admitted, and he was allowed to return into the corridor. On the numbers being counted, there was a majority of ONE for Lord Castlereagh, and, exclusive of Mr. Trench's conduct; but for that of Mr. Fox the numbers would have been equal; the measure would have been negatived by the Speaker's vote, and the renewal of it, the next day, have been prevented, this would have been a most important victory.

The mischief of the Place Bill now stared its framers in the face, and gave the Secretary a code of instruction how to arrange a Parliament against the ensuing session.

To render the circumstance still more extraordinary and unfortunate for Mr. Fox's reputation, it was subsequently discovered, by the public records, that Mr. Fox's assertion was false; but the following day Lord Castlereagh purchased him outright, and then, and not before, appointed him to the nominal office of Escheator of Munster, and left the seat of Lord Ely for another of his creatures. This is mentioned not only as one of the most reprehensible public acts committed during the discussion, but because it was the primary cause of the measure being persisted in.

The exultations of the public on this disappointment of the Minister knew no bounds; they reflected not that, next day, a new debate must endanger their ambiguous triumph. The national character of the Irish, during both the 23rd and 24th, displayed itself in full vigor.

The debate upon the report of the address, and the pertinacity which urged the Government to a second combat, soon roused them from their dream of security.

Both parties now stood in a difficult and precarious predicament; the Minister had not time to gain ground by the usual practices of the Secretary, and the question must have been either totally relinquished or again discussed. The opposition were, as yet, uncertain how far the last debate might cause any numerical alteration in their favor, each

party calculated on a small majority, and it was considered that a defeat would be equally ruinous to either.

It was supposed that the Minister would, according to all former precedent, withdraw from his situation, if left in a minority, whilst an increased majority, however small, against the Anti-Unionists, might give plausible grounds for future discussions.

The next day the people collected in vast multitudes around the House; a strong sensation was everywhere perceptible; immense numbers of ladies of distinction crowded at an early hour into the galleries, and by their presence and their gestures animated that patriotic spirit upon the prompt energy of which alone depended the fate of Ireland.

Secret messengers were dispatched in every direction to bring in loitering or reluctant members; every emissary that Government could rely upon was busily employed the entire morning, and five and thirty minutes after four o'clock, in the afternoon of the 24th of January, 1799, the House met to decide, by the adoption or rejection of the Address, the question of national independence or annihilation. Within the corridors of the House a shameless and unprecedented alacrity appeared among the friends of Government.

Mr. Cooke, the Under Secretary, who, throughout all the subsequent stages of the question was the private and efficient actuary of the Parliamentary seduction, on this night exceeded even himself, both in his public and private exertions to gain over the wavering members. Admiral Pakenham, a naturally friendly and good-hearted gentleman, that night acted like the captain of a press-gang and actually hauled in some of the members who were desirous of retiring. He had declared that he would act in any capacity, according to the exigencies of his party; and he did not shrink from his task.

Mr. Marshall, of the Secretary's office (not a member), forgot all decorum and disgraced the cause by his exploits about the entrances to the House. Others acted as keepers in the coffee-room, and no member who could be seduced, intimidated, or deceived, could possibly escape the nets that were extended to secure him.

Nor did the leaders of opposition remain inactive; but the attendance of their friends being voluntary, was, of course, precarious. The exertions of Mr. Bowes Daly and others were, however, strenuous.

At length a hot and open canvass, by the friends of Government, was perceived, wherever an uncertain or reluctant member could be found, or his connections discovered.

The debate commenced about seven o'clock. Silence prevailed in the galleries, but an indecent confusion and noise ran through the corridors, and frequently excited surprise and alarm at its continuance: it was the momentous canvass: it was rude, sometimes boisterous, and altogether unusual.

The Speaker at length took his chair, and his cry of "Order! order!" obtained a profound silence. Dignified and peremptory, he was seldom disobeyed; and a chairman more despotic, from his wisdom and the respect and affection of the members of every side, never presided over a popular assembly.

When prayers commenced, all was in a moment gloomy and decorous, and a deep solemnity corresponded with the vital importance of the subject they were to determine.

This debate, in point of warmth, much exceeded the former. Lord Castlereagh was silent; his eye ran around the assembly as if to ascertain the situation, and was often withdrawn with a look of uncertainty and disappointment. The numbers had a little increased since the last division, principally by members who had not declared themselves, and of whose opinions the Secretary was ignorant.

Lord Castlereagh, however, winning under his negative castigation of the former evening, had now determined to act on the offensive, and give, by his example, more spirit and zeal to his followers than they had hitherto exhibited. It was his only course, and though inoperative, it was ably attempted.

The debate, however, had hardly commenced when he was assailed as if by a storm. Several members rose at once to tell the Secretary their opinions of his merits; a personal hostility appeared palpable between the parties; the subject and arguments were the same as those of the preceding night, but they were accompanied much more by individual allusions.

Sir John Parnell, late Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had been dismissed for refusing to support a Union, opened the debate. He spoke with great ability; he plainly avowed his opinion that it was a revolutionary change of the Constitution which the Parliament had no power to enact, and to



which the King could not, consistently with his Coronation Oath, give the royal assent.

Mr. Tighe, of Wicklow, followed and delivered his sentiments against the measure in the same terms, and with equal decision. Mr. George Ponsonby arose to move an amendment negating the address as far as it alluded to a Union.

When Mr. George Ponsonby was roused he had great debating powers, on minor subjects he was often vapid, but on this occasion he far exceeded himself in argument, elocution, and in fortitude. He was sincere, his blood warmed; he reasoned with a force, a boldness, and with an absence of all reserve which he never before had so energetically exhibited. As a lawyer, a statesman, and a loyal Irish subject, he denied that either the Lords, or the Commons, or the King of Ireland, had the power of passing or assenting to a legislative Union. He avowed his opinion that the measure was revolutionary, and would run the destructive lengths of endangering the compact between the crown and the subjects, and the connection of the two nations.

It is scarcely to be imagined what an effect such a speech, from a calm, discreet, and loyal man, a constitutional lawyer, and representative of a high aristocratic family, produced in that House. It was, in point of extent and powers, unexpected from so calm a character; and the impression therefore was proportionately greater.

The words, as he spoke them, were imbibed by every man who was a free agent in Parliament. In the course of his speech he assailed Lord Castlereagh with a strength and unreserved severity which greatly exceeded the usual bounds of his philippics.

Cool and deliberate irony, ten times more piercing than the sharpest satire, flowed from his lips in a slow, rolling flood of indignant denunciation. His calm language never for one moment yielded to his warm impressions; and it was doubly formidable from being restrained by prudence, and dictated by conviction.

During Mr. Ponsonby's oration a very impressive scene was exhibited on the treasury bench. Lord Castlereagh had been anticipated; he seemed to be astounded; he moved restlessly in his seat; he became obviously disconcerted, whispered to those who sat near him, and appeared more sensitive than he had ever been on any public occasion.



As Mr. Ponsonby advanced the Secretary became more affected; occasionally he rose to interrupt; and when Mr. Ponsonby ceased he appeared to be struggling with violent emotions; but he was unable to suppress the poignancy of his feelings, and he writhed under the castigation. His face flushed; his eyes kindled, and, for the first time in that House, he appeared to be rising into a high state of agitation. Mr. Ponsonby, who stood directly before him, formed an admirable contrast; not a feature moved; not a muscle was disturbed; his small grey eyes, riveted upon his adversary, expressed contempt and superiority more eloquently than language; and with these cool and scornful glances, which are altogether indescribable, Mr. Ponsonby, unperturbed, listened to a reply which raised Lord Castleleagh in the estimation of his adherents.

He had that morning decided on a course which the experience of the former evening had induced him to think might affect the debate in favor of the Government. He had resolved to act on the offensive, and, by an extravagant invective against the principles of the Anti-Unionists, to blind and detach some of the dullest of the country gentlemen from a party which he intended to represent as an anarchical faction, and by holding up to his supporters an exemplary contempt for all public opinion, diminish the effect of patriotic declamation, from the powerful effect of which the opponents of a Union acquired so much strength and importance. On these grounds he had decided to act boldly himself, and to encourage and excite a simultaneous attack upon the principles and conduct of the leading members who opposed him.

For this species of conflict the youthful Minister was admirably adapted. He had sufficient firmness to advance, and sufficient pertinacity to persist in any assertion. Never had he more occasion to exert all his powers, nor did he fail in his efforts. He had no qualms or compunction to arrest his progress. In his reply there was no assertion he did not risk, no circumstance he did not vouch for, no aspersion he did not cast, and he even went lengths which he afterwards repented. To the bar he applied the term "pettifoggers"; to the opposition, "cabal—combinators—desperate faction"; and to the nation itself, "barbarism—ignorance," and "insensibility to protection and paternal regards she had ever experienced from the British nation." His speech was severe

beyond anything he had ever uttered within the walls of Parliament, and far exceeded the powers he was supposed to possess. He raked up every act of Mr. Ponsonby's political career, and handled it with a masterly severity; but it was in the tone and in the manner of an angry gentleman. He had flown at the highest game, and his opponent (never off his guard) attended to his Lordship with a contemptuous and imperturbable placidity which frequently gave Mr. Ponsonby a great advantage over warmer debaters. On this occasion he seemed not at all to feel the language of Lord Castlereagh; he knew that he had provoked it, and he saw that he had spoken effectually by the irritation of his opponent.

Lord Castlereagh was greatly exhausted, and Mr. Ponsonby, turning round, audibly observed, with a frigid smile, and an air of utter indifference—"the ravings of an irritated youth—it was natural."

This was one of the most important personal conflicts during the discussions of the Union, and it had a very powerful effect, at least, on the spirit of his Lordship's followers. Truth was unimportant to him; on personal attacks, his misrepresentation might honorably be retracted at convenient opportunities. He had no public character to forfeit; and a majority of his supporters were similarly circumstanced. Prompt personal hostility, therefore, was the line he had that morning decided on; and it was the most politic step a minister so desperately circumstanced could adopt. When vicious measures are irrevocably adopted, obtrusive compunction must instantly be banished. He determined to reject every consideration but that of increasing his majority; but he was routed by the very course he had calculated on to ensure a victory. The foresight of Mr. Ponsonby had penetrated through his policy, and showed him that, to counteract the enemy, he should become the assailant, seize the very position his adversary had selected and anticipate the very line on which he had determined to try the battle. This line Mr. Ponsonby had acted upon, and in this he had succeeded.

The discussion proceeded with extraordinary asperity; but the influence of the Speaker, with a few exceptions, preserved the members in tolerable order; it was often difficult to determine which side transgressed the most. Mr. Arthur Moore on this night took a decided part; and Mr. Egan trampled down the metaphorical sophistries of Mr. William

Smith as to the competence of Parliament, such reasoning he called rubbish, and such reasoners were scavengers; like a dray horse he galloped over all his opponents, plunging and licking, and overthrowing all before him. No member on that night pronounced a more sincere, clumsy, powerful oration—of matter he had abundance—of language he made no selection; and he was aptly compared to the Trojan horse, sounding as if he had armed men within him.

Never was there a more unfortunate quotation for the Government than one made by Mr Serjeant Stanly from Judge Blackstone.

The dictum of a puisne Judge, in a British court of law, was cited to influence the opinion of 300 members in the Irish Parliament on the subject of their own annihilation.

The debate continued with undiminished animation and hostility until ten o'clock on the morning of the 24th, when Sir Laurence Parsons (Lord Rosse) supported Mr. Ponsonby in a speech luminous, and in some parts almost sublime. He had caught the flame which his colleague had but kindled, and blazed with eloquence of which he had shown but few examples. The impression was powerful.

Mr. Frederick Falkiner, member for Dublin County, who immediately followed, was one of the most remarkable instances of inflexible public integrity in Ireland; he would have been a valuable acquisition to the Government, but nothing could corrupt him. Week after week he was ineffectually tempted, through his friends, by a peerage or aught he might desire; he replied, "I am poor, 'tis true; but no human power, no reward, no torture, no elevation, shall ever tempt me to betray my country; never mention to me again so infamous a proposal." He was, however, afterwards treated ungratefully by the very constituents whom he had obeyed, and died a victim to poverty and patriotism.

Mr. James Fitzgerald had been dismissed from the office of Prime Serjeant, the highest at the bar, for refusing to relinquish his independence. He scorned to retain it under circumstances of dishonor, and on this night spoke at great length and with a train of reasoning which must have been decisive in an uncorrupted assembly; he refused every offer, and never returned to any office.

Colonel Maxwell (Lord Farnham), Mr. Lee (Waterford), Mr. Barrington, Judge of the High Court of Admiralty, and

many others pressed forward to deliver their sentiments against so fatal a project. Every moment the debate grew warmer, and the determination to oppose it became more obvious, the members of Government were staggered, the storm increased, but Lord Castlereagh was calm; he rose and spoke with a confident assurance peculiar to himself, and particularly disavowed all corruption, though he had dismissed every man who would not promise to support him, and had nearly seventy subservient placemen at that moment at his side.

At length Mr. Plunket arose and, in the ablest speech ever heard by any member in that Parliament, went at once to the grand and decisive point, the incompetence of Parliament; he could go no further on principle than Mr. Ponsonby, but his language was irresistible, and he left nothing to be urged. It was perfect in eloquence, and unanswerable in reasoning. Its effect was indescribable; and, for the first time, Lord Castlereagh, whom he personally assailed, seemed to shrink from the encounter. That speech was of great weight, and it proved the eloquence, the sincerity, and the fortitude of the speaker.

But a short speech on that night, which gave a new sensation and excited novel observations, was a maiden speech by Colonel O'Donnell of Mayo County, the eldest son of Sir Neil O'Donnell, a man of very large fortune in that county; he was colonel of the Mayo regiment. He was a brave officer, and a well-bred gentleman; and in all the situations of life he showed excellent qualities. On this night, roused by Lord Castlereagh's invectives, he could not contain his indignation; and by anticipation "disclaimed all future allegiance, if a Union were effected; he held it as a vicious revolution, and avowed that he would take the field at the head of his regiment to oppose its execution, and would resist rebels in rich clothes as he had done the rebels in rags." And for his speech in Parliament he was dismissed from his regiment without further notice.

As a contrast to the language of Colonel O'Donnell, it is curious to observe the new exhibition of Mr. Treuch, of Woodlawn. He was not satisfied with the disgusting exhibition of the preceding night, but again introduced himself to a notice which common modesty would have avoided. He now entered into a defence of his former tergiversation, and, most



unfortunate for himself, contradicted distinctly the substance of both his former speeches. He thus solved all the doubts which might have arisen as to his former conduct, closed the mouth of every friend from any possibility of defending him, and delivered himself, without reserve, into the hands of his seducers. He said "he had, since the night before, been fully convinced of the advantages of a Union, and would certainly support it." The Irish Peerage was soon honored by his addition, as Lord Ashtown.

After the most stormy debate remembered in the Irish Parliament the question was loudly called for by the Opposition, who were now tolerably secure of a majority; never did so much solicitude appear in any public assembly; at length above sixty members had spoken, the subject was exhausted, and all parties seemed impatient. The House divided, and the Opposition withdrew to the Court of Requests. It is not easy to conceive, still less to describe, the anxiety of that moment, a considerable delay took place. Mr. Ponsonby and Sir Laurence Parsons were at length named tellers for the amendment; Mr. W. Smith and Lord Tyrone for the address. One hundred and eleven members had declared against the Union, and when the doors were opened one hundred and five were discovered to be the total number of the Minister's adherents. The gratification of the Anti-Unionists was unbounded, and as they walked deliberately in, one by one, to be counted, the eager expectators, ladies as well as gentlemen, leaning over the galleries, ignorant of the result, were panting with expectation. Lady Castlereagh, then one of the finest women of the Court, appeared in the sergeant's box, palpitating for her husband's fate. The desponding appearance and fallen crests of the Ministerial benches, and the exulting air of the opposition members as they entered, were intelligible. The murmurs of suppressed anxiety would have excited an interest even in the most unconnected stranger who had known the objects and importance of the contest. How much more, therefore, must every Irish breast which panted in the galleries have experienced that thrilling enthusiasm which accompanies the achievement of patriotic actions, when the Minister's defeat was announced from the chair! A due sense of respect and decorum restrained the galleries within proper bounds; but a low cry of satisfaction from the female audience could not be prevented, and no sooner was the event



made known out of doors than the crowds that had waited during the entire night, with increasing impatience for the vote which was to decide upon the independence of their country, sent forth loud and reiterated shouts of exultation which, resounding through the corridors and penetrating to the body of the House, added to the triumph of the conquerors, and to the misery of the adherents of the conquered Minister.

The members assembled in the lobby were preparing to separate when Mr. Ponsonby requested they would return into the House and continue a very few minutes, as he had business of the utmost importance for their consideration; this produced a profound silence; Mr. Ponsonby then, in a few words, "congratulated the House and the country on the honest and patriotic assertion of their liberties; but declared that he considered there would be no security against future attempts to overthrow their independence, but by a direct and absolute declaration of the rights of Irishmen, recorded upon their journals as the decided sense of the people, through their Parliament; and he, therefore, without further preface, moved "That this House will ever maintain the undoubted birthright of Irishmen, by preserving an independent Parliament of Lords and Commons resident in this Kingdom, as stated and approved by his Majesty and the British Parliament in 1782."

Lord Castlereagh, conceiving that further resistance was unavailing, only said "that he considered such a motion of the most dangerous tendency; however, if the House were determined on it, he begged to declare his entire dissent, and on their own heads be the consequences of so wrong and inconsiderate a measure." No further opposition was made by the Government, and the Speaker putting the question, a loud cry of approbation followed, with but two negatives, those of Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Toler (Lord Norbury); the motion was carried, and the members were rising to withdraw when the Speaker, wishing to be strictly correct, called to Mr. Ponsonby to write down his motion accurately; he, accordingly, walked to the table to write it down. This delay of a few moments, unimportant as it might seem in the common course of human occurrences, was an incident which ultimately deranged the constitution of an empire and annihilated the legislature of an independent nation; a single moment,

the most critical that ever occurred in history; and of all the events of Ireland, the most fatal and irretrievable.

This may teach posterity that the destinies of nations are governed by the same chances, subject to the same fatalities, and affected by the same misfortunes as those of the humblest individual.

Whilst Mr. Ponsonby was writing his motion, every member, in profound silence, was observing the sensations of the opposite party, and conjecturing the feelings and anticipating the conduct of their adversaries.

This motion involved, in one sentence, everything which was sought after by the one party and dreaded by the other; its adoption must have ruined the Minister and dismissed the Irish Government. The Treasury Bench held a mournful silence, the Attorney General, Mr. Toler, alone appeared to bear his impending misfortune with a portion of that ease and playfulness which never forsook him.

On Mr. Ponsonby's handing up his motion, he stood firm and collected and looked around him with the honest confidence of a man who had performed his duty and saved his country; the silence of death prevailed in the galleries, and the whole assembly displayed a spectacle as solemn and important as any country or any era had ever exhibited.

The Speaker repeated the question—"the ayes" burst forth into a loud peal, the gallery was in immediate motion, all was congratulation. On the question being put the second time (as was usual), a still louder and more reiterated cry of "aye, aye," resounded from every quarter; only the same two negatives were heard, feebly, from the ministerial side; Government had given up the contest, and the independence of Ireland was on the very verge of permanent security, when Mr. William Charles Fortescue, member for Louth County, requested to be heard before the final decision was announced.

He said "that he was adverse to the measure of a legislative Union, and had given his decided vote against it, but he did not wish to bind himself forever; possible circumstances might hereafter occur which might tender that measure expedient for the empire, and he did not approve of any determination which forever closed the doors against any possibility of future discussion."

The opposition were paralyzed, the Government were roused, a single sentence plausibly conceived, and (without

reflecting on its destructive consequence) moderately uttered, by a respectable man and an avowed Anti-Unionist, eventually decided the fate of the Irish nation. It offered a pretext for timidity, a precedent for caution, and a subterfuge for wavering venality.

Mr. French, of Roscommon, a country gentleman of high character, and Lord Cole, a young nobleman of an honest, inconsiderate mind who had, on the last division, voted sincerely against the Minister, now, without a moment's reflection on the ruin which must necessarily attend, every diversity of sentiment in a party associated by only one tie, and bound together only upon one subject, declared themselves of Mr. Fortescue's opinion. Mr. John Cladius Beresford, who had only been restrained from adhesion to the Clare connection by being representative of the metropolis, avowed himself of the same determination; and thus that constitutional security which a direct and peremptory declaration of indefeasible rights, one moment before, was on the point of permanently establishing was, by the inconsiderate and temporizing words of one feeble-minded member, lost forever. It is impossible to express the surprise and disappointment of the Anti-Unionists.

To be defeated by the effort of an enemy was to be borne, but to fall by the secession of a friend was insupportable. The narrow jealousies and unconnected materials of the Anti-Unionists were no longer to be concealed, either from friends or enemies. Mr. Ponsonby felt the critical situation of the country, the opposition had but a majority of five on the first division; three seceders would have given a majority for Government, and a division could not be risked.

Mr. Ponsonby's presence of mind instantly suggested the only remaining alternative. He lamented "that the smallest contrariety of opinion should have arisen amongst men who ought to be united by the most powerful of all inducements, the salvation of their independence. He perceived, however, a wish that he should not press the motion, founded, he supposed, on a mistaken confidence in the engagements of the Noble Lord (Castlereagh), that he would not again bring forward that ruinous measure without the decided approbation of the people, and of the Parliament. Though he must doubt the sincerity of the Minister's engagements, he could not hesitate to acquiesce in the wishes of his friends, and he would therefore withdraw his motion "

The sudden transition from exultation to despondency became instantly apparent by the dead silence which followed Mr. Ponsonby's declaration; the change was so rapid and so unexpected that from the galleries, which a moment before were full of congratulation and of pleasure, not a single word was heard. Crestfallen and humbled, many instantly withdrew from the scene, and though the people without knew of nothing but their victory, the retreat was a subject of the most serious solicitude to every friend of Irish independence.

Such an advantage could not escape the anxious eye of Government; chagrin and disappointment had changed sides, and the friends of the Union who a moment before had considered their measure as nearly extinguished rose upon their success, retorted in their turn, and opposed its being withdrawn. It was, however, too tender a ground for either party to insist upon a division; a debate was equally to be avoided, and the motion was suffered to be withdrawn. Sir Henry Cavendish keenly and sarcastically remarked that "it was a retreat after a victory." After a day's and a night's debate, without intermission, the House adjourned at eleven o'clock the ensuing morning.

Upon the rising of the House, the populace became tumultuous and a violent disposition against those who had supported the Union was manifest, not only amongst the common people, but amongst those of a much higher class, who had been mingling with them.

On the Speaker's coming out of the House, the horses were taken from his carriage and he was drawn in triumph through the streets by the people, who conceived the whimsical idea of tackling the Lord Chancellor to the coach and (as a captive general in a Roman triumph) forcing him to tug at the chariot of his conqueror.

Had it been effected, it would have been a signal anecdote, and would, at least, have immortalized the classic genius of the Irish.

The populace closely pursued his Lordship for that extraordinary purpose; he escaped with great difficulty and fled, with pistol in hand, to a receding doorway in Clarendon street. But the people, who pursued him in sport, set up a loud laugh at him as he stood terrified against the door; they offered him no personal violence, and returned in high glee to their own innocent amusement of drawing the Speaker.



A scene of joy and triumph appeared universal, every countenance had a smile, throughout all ranks and classes of the people men shook their neighbors heartily by the hand, as if the Minister's defeat was an event of individual good fortune. The mob seemed as well disposed to joy as mischief, and that was saying much for a Dublin assemblage. But a view of their enemies, as they came skulking from behind the corridors, occasionally roused them to no very tranquil temperature. Some members had to try their speed, and others their intrepidity. Mr. Richard Martin, unable to get clear, turned on his hunters and boldly faced a mob of many thousands, with a small pocket pistol in his hand. He swore most vehemently that, if they advanced six inches on him, he would shoot "every mother's babe of them as dead as that paving stone" (kicking one). The united spirit and fun of his declaration, and his little pocket pistol aimed at ten thousand men, women and children, were so entirely to the taste of our Irish populace that all symptoms of hostility ceased; they gave him three cheers, and he regained his home without further molestation.

Mr. O'Driscoll, a gentleman of the Irish Bar, one of the most sincere and active Anti-Unionists, used great and successful efforts to tranquilize the people; and to his persuasions was chiefly attributed their peaceable dispersion. In one particular instance, he certainly prevented a most atrocious mischief, if not a great crime, by his prompt and spirited interference.

The House of Lords met on the 22nd of January, 1799, the same day as the Commons, to receive the speech of the Viceroy. Though the nation was not unprepared for any instance of its subserviency, some patriotic spirits might reasonably have been expected on so momentous a subject as the Union. In this expectation, however, it was but feebly gratified.

Never did a body of hereditary nobles, many of ancient family, and several of splendid fortune, so disgrace their ancestry.

After an ineffectual resistance by some, whose integrity was invincible, the Irish Lords recorded their own humiliation, and, in a state of absolute infatuation, perpetrated the most extraordinary act of legislative suicide which ever stained the records of a nation.



The reply of the Irish Lords to the speech of the British Viceroy coincided in his recommendation and virtually consented to prostrate themselves and their posterity forever. The prerogatives of rank, the pride of ancestry, the glory of the peerage, and the rights of the country were equally sacrificed.

The facility with which the Irish Lords re-echoed their sentence of extinction was quite unexampled.

That stultified facility can only be elucidated by taking a brief statistical view of what was once considered an august assembly, but which the overbearing influence of the absolute and vindictive Chancellor had for some years reduced to a mere instrument of his ambition.

In the hands of the Chancellor, Lord Clare, the House was powerless; it was his mere automaton or puppet, which he coerced or humored according to his ambition or caprice.

There were, however, amongst the Irish nobility a few men of spirit, pride, talent, and integrity, but they were too few for resistance.

The education of the Irish noblemen of that day was little calculated for debate or Parliamentary duties; they very seldom took any active part in Parliamentary discussions, and more rarely attained to that confidence in public speaking without which no effect can be produced. They could argue, or might declaim, but were unequal to what is termed debate; and being confirmed in their torpidity by an habitual abstinence from Parliamentary discussions, when the day of danger came they were unequal to the contest.

The Bishop of Down was a prelate of the most faultless character; the extreme beauty of his countenance, the gentleness of his manners, and the patriarchal dignity of his figure rendered him one of the most interesting persons in society.

His talents were considerable, but they were neutralized by his modesty; and he seldom could be prevailed upon to rise in the House of Peers upon political subjects. On this night, however, stung to the quick by the invectives, and indignant at the designs of the Chancellor, he made a reply to him of which he was supposed incapable. Severity from the Bishop of Down was likewise so unusual that the few sentences he pronounced stunned the champion more than all the speeches of his more disciplined opponents.

Nothing, however, could overcome the influence of Lord Clare. The Irish Lords lay prostrate before the Government,

but the leaders were not inattentive to their own interests. The defeat of the Government in the Commons gave them an importance they had not expected.

The debates and conduct of the Irish peers bear a comparatively unimportant share in the transactions of that epoch, and have but little interest in the memoirs of those times, but the accounts of Lord Annesley, etc., record their corruption.

It is not the object, therefore, of these anecdotes to dilate more upon the proceedings of that degraded assembly than incidentally to introduce, as epistles, their individual actions, and to state that a great proportion of the million and a half levied upon Ireland, and distributed by Lord Castlereagh's Commissioners of Compensation, went into the pockets of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal of Ireland.

From the hour that Mr. Ponsonby's motion was withdrawn, Government gained strength, the standard of visionary honors and of corrupt emoluments was raised for recruits, a congratulatory, instead of a consolatory dispatch, had been instantly forwarded to Mr. Pitt, and another to the Duke of Portland, and it was not difficult to foresee that the result of that night, though apparently a victory over the proposition for a Union, afforded so strong a point for the Minister in the subsequent negotiations, by which he had determined to achieve his measure. The arguments and divisions on succeeding debates proved, beyond the possibility of question, the overwhelming advantage which Mr. Fortescue's precedent had given to those who were determined to dispose of their consistency under color of their moderation.

The bad consequences which were likely to result from this event did not at first occur to any of the Opposition. Some of the leading members of that party, highly elated at the success of the last division, could see nothing but the prospect of an increasing majority and an ultimate triumph; these were numerous but short-sighted. Others regarded, with a wise solicitude, the palpable want of political connection in the party that opposed the Minister. However, Lord Castlereagh who had so confidently pressed forward a measure which Parliament had decidedly rejected, and the public universally reprobated, found his situation the most difficult imaginable. He had no just reason to expect support in minor measures, who had proved himself utterly unworthy of the

confidence of Parliament on one of the first magnitude. His pride was humbled, but his firmness and perseverance overcame his difficulties, and the next important division on Lord Curry's motion clearly proved the consummate address with which he had trafficked with the members during the interval. All the weapons of seduction were in his hands; and, to acquire a majority, he had only to overcome the wavering and feeble. A motion of Lord Curry's, made a few days afterwards in order to prevent any future scheme of a Union, after a long debate was also negatived (by a majority of fifty-eight), and thus concluded all discussion on the Union for that session. The session, however, had scarcely closed when his Lordship recommended his warfare against the country. The treasury was in his hands, patronage in his note book, and all the influence which the scourge or the pardon, reward or punishment could possibly produce on the trembling rebels was openly resorted to. Lord Cornwallis determined to put Irish honesty to the test, and set out upon an experimental tour through those parts of the country where the nobility and gentry were likely to entertain him. He artfully selected those places where he could best make his way with corporations at public dinners, and with the aristocracy, country gentlemen, and farmers, by visiting their mansions and cottages. Ireland was thus canvassed and every gaol was converted to a hustings.

In reflecting, therefore, on the extraordinary fate of Mr. Ponsonby's declaratory motion just and not inconsiderate alarm must have been excited in the mind of every man who had determined boldly and unequivocally to support the freedom of his country.

It was now difficult to perceive that, to the cool and reasoning part of the nation, melancholy forebodings must naturally arise from the decided absence of that cordial, unqualified co-operation amongst the members of the opposition, by whose undeviating unanimity alone the revival of the project and the probable ruin of the country could be resisted.

It was evident that by the thoughtless conduct of Mr. Fortescue, Lord Cole, and Mr. French, the conclusive rejection of the proposal was prevented. Had they been even one moment silent, Ireland would have been a proud, prosperous, free, tranquil, and productive member of the British Empire. But their puerile inconsistency lost their country, gave a clue

to the Secretary and the Government before plunged in a hopeless perplexity, and opened a wide door for future discussion which Mr Ponsonby's motion would have forever prevented.

In a body composed as the Parliament of Ireland, though this misfortune must ever be deplored and those gentlemen forever censured, yet such an event was not a subject for astonishment. A great number of those who composed the House were most inexperienced statesmen; they meddled but little individually in any arrangement of debates, and voted according to their party or their sentiments, without the habit of any previous consultation.

Such men, therefore, after the last division against the Minister, could not suppose he would again revive the question, and they partook of the general satisfaction. Moderation was now recommended as the proper course for a loyal opposition, and the proposal for a Union having been virtually negatived, it was observed by the courtly oppositionists to be at least unkind, if not indiscreet, to push Government further at a "moment like this "

On the other hand, those who wished to complete the victory could not shut their eyes to the hazard of moderate proceedings, and their zeal led them to wish to improve their advantage, and, if possible, to remove Lord Cornwallis from the Government, as a finishing stroke to the measure. But the conduct of Mr. Fortescue and his supporters had miserably deceived them, and had convinced the leaders of the Opposition that they were about to tread very uncertain ground, and that their first consideration should be, how far the possibility of attaining their ultimate object should be weighed against the probable event of losing their majority by another trial of strength.

Reasoning people without doors saw the danger still more clearly than those who had individually to encounter it. Regardless of the solemn engagements he had made in the House, and by which he had imposed on many of the opposition, the Minister and his agents lost no opportunity, nor omitted any means, of making good their party amongst the members who had not publicly declared themselves, and of endeavoring to pervert the principles and corrupt the consistency of those who had. Lord Castlereagh's ulterior efforts were extensive and indefatigable, his spirit revived and every hour gained



ground on his opponents. He clearly perceived that the ranks of the Opposition were too open to be strong, and too mixed to be unanimous. The extraordinary fate of Mr. Ponsonby's declaration of rights, and the debate on a similar motion by Lord Corry, which so shortly afterwards met a more serious negative, proved the truth of these observations and identified the persons through whom that truth was to be afterwards exemplified.

The disheartening effects of Mr. Fortescue's conduct (notwithstanding the general exultation of the country) appeared to make a very powerful impression on the public mind; it was assiduously circulated by Government as a triumph, and on all occasions reluctantly alluded to by the Anti-Unionists; it became apparent that the increasing majority against the Minister, on the second division, if unaccompanied by that fatal circumstance, would have effectually established the progressive power of the Opposition, and rapidly hastened the upset of Government. But the advantage of that majority was lost, and the possibility of exciting division amongst the Anti-Unionists could no longer be questioned. This consideration had an immediate and extensive effect; the timid recommenced their fears, the wavering began to think of consequences, the venal to negotiate; and the public mind, particularly amongst the Catholics, who still smarted from the scourge, became so deeply affected and so timorously doubtful that some of the persons, assuming to themselves the title of Catholic Leaders, sought an audience in order to inquire from Marquis Cornwallis, "What would be the advantage to the Catholics if a Union should happen to be effected in Ireland?"

However, great confidence in an ultimate crushing of the project kept its place in the Opposition. The Parliament, unaccustomed to see the Minister with a majority of only one, considered him as totally defeated. A rising party is sure to gain proselytes. Government, therefore, lost ground as the Opposition gained it; and for a few days it was generally supposed that the Viceroy and Secretary must resign. Many of their adherents shrunk from them. A large proportion of Parliament was far beyond the power either of fear or corruption, yet the impartial history of these times must throw a partial shade over the consistency of Ireland and exhibit some of the once leading characters in both Houses in a course of the most humiliating, corrupt, and disgusting



servility; contradicting by the last act of their political lives, the whole tenor of their former principles, from the first moment they had the power of declaring them to the nation. In another quarter those who formed an Opposition to the Minister on the question of a Union had been, and wished to continue, his avowed supporters on every other. The custom of the times, the venality of the court, even the excessive habits of convivial luxury had combined gradually to blunt the poignancy of public spirit, and the activity of patriotic exertions, on ordinary subjects. The terrors of the rebellion, scarcely yet extinguished, had induced many to cling for protection round a government whose principles they had condemned, and whose politics they had resisted. The subtle Viceroy knew full well how to make his advantage of the moment, and by keeping up the delusion, under the name of loyalty and discretion, he restrained within narrow limits the spirit of constitutional independence wherever he found he could not otherwise subdue it.



Ornament on leather case of Book of Armagh.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers."



## CHAPTER XIX.

IRELAND'S FIGHT FOR LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENCE ENDS IN DEFEAT  
—THE UNION IS CARRIED—THE NATION IS EXTINGUISHED.

It is impossible to comprise in a single volume a tithe of the means and measures of every description resorted to by the Viceroy and Secretary not only to seduce the members, but to procure addresses favorable to their views, from every or any rank or description of people, from the first rank to the very lowest order: beggars, cottagers, tradesmen, every individual who could be influenced were tempted to put their names or marks to addresses, not one word of which they understood the intent, still less the ruinous result of. Even public instances were adduced, some mentioned in Parliament, and not denied, of felons in the gaols purchasing pardon, or transmutation, by signatures or by forging names to Union eulogiums.

English generals who, at a moment when martial law existed or a recollection of its execution was still fresh in every memory, could not fail to have their own influence over proclaimed districts and bleeding peasantry; of course, their success in procuring addresses to Parliament was not limited either by their power, their disposition or their instructions.

The Anti-Union addresses, innumerable and fervid, in their very nature voluntary, and the signatures of high consideration, were stigmatized by the title of seditious and disloyal; whilst those of the compelled, the bribed, and the culprit were printed and circulated by every means that the treasury or the influence of the Government could effect.

Mr. Darby, High Sheriff of King's County, and Major Rogers of the artillery had gone so far as to place two six-pounders towards the doors of the Court House, where the gentlemen and freeholders of the county were assembling to address as Anti-Unionists; and it is not to be wondered at that the dread of grape shot not only stopped those, but numerous meetings for similar purposes; yet this was one of the means taken to prevent the expression of public meetings without, and formed a proper comparison for the measures resorted to within the walls of Parliament.

As this volume cannot detail the innumerable circumstances and episodes which a perfect history of those times would embody, it may be enough to say that if the British readers of this work will imagine any act that an indefatigable, and, on this subject, the most corrupt of Governments could by possibility resort to, to carry a measure they had determined on, such readers cannot imagine acts more illegal, unconstitutional, and corrupt than those of the Viceroy of Ireland, his secretary and under-secretary employed from the close of the session of 1799 to that of 1800; in the last of the Irish Parliament everything, therefore, is passed over, or but slightly touched on, till the opening of the last session.

Lords Cornwallis and Castlereagh, having made good progress during the recess, now discarded all secrecy and reserve. To recite the various acts of simple metallic corruption which were practised without any reserve, during the summer of 1799, are too numerous for this volume. It will be sufficient to describe the proceedings, without particularizing the individuals. Many of the Peers and several of the Commoners had the patronage of boroughs, the control of which was essential to the success of the Minister's project. These patrons Lord Castlereagh assailed by every means which his power and situation afforded. Lord Cornwallis was the remote, Lord Castlereagh the intermediate, and Mr. Secretary Cooke the immediate agents on many of these bargains. Lord Shannon, the Marquis of Ely, and several other Peers commanding votes, after much coquetry, had been secured during the first session, but the defeat of Government rendered their future support uncertain. The Parliamentary patrons had breathing time after the preceding session and began to tremble for their patronage and importance; and some desperate step became necessary to Government to insure a continuance of the supporters of these patronages. This object gave rise to a measure which the British nation will scarcely believe possible, its enormity is without parallel.

Lord Castlereagh's first object was to introduce into the House, by means of the Place Bill, a sufficient number of dependents to balance all opposition. He then boldly announced his intention to turn the scale by bribes to all who would accept them, under the name of compensation for the loss of patronage and interest. He publicly declared, first, that every nobleman who returned members to Parliament

should be paid, in cash, £15,000, for every member so returned; secondly, that every member who had purchased a seat in Parliament should have his purchase-money repaid to him, by the Treasury of Ireland; thirdly, that all members of Parliament, or others, who were losers by a Union, should be fully recompensed for their losses and that £1,500,000 should be devoted to this service; in other terms, all who supported his measure were, under some pretense or other, to share in this bank of corruption.

A declaration so flagitious and treasonable was never made in any country; but it had a powerful effect in his favor, and, before the meeting of Parliament, he had secured a small majority (as heretofore mentioned) of eight above a moiety of the members, and he courageously persisted.

After the debate on the Union, in 1800, he performed his promise and brought in a bill to raise one million and a half of money upon the Irish people, nominally to compensate, but really to bribe their representatives for betraying their honor and selling their country. This bill was feebly resisted, the division of January and February (1800) had reduced the success of the Government to a certainty, and all further opposition was abandoned. It was unimportant to Lord Castlereagh, who received the plunder of the nation; the taxes were levied and a vicious partiality was effected in the partition.

The assent to the bill by his Majesty, as King of Ireland, gives rise to perhaps the most grave consideration suggested in these Memoirs.

A king, bound by the principles of the British Constitution, giving his sacred and voluntary fiat to a bill to levy taxes for the compensation of members of Parliament for their loss of the opportunities of selling what it was criminal to sell or purchase, could scarcely be believed by the British people.

It may be curious to consider how the English would endure the proposal of such a measure in their own country; a British Premier who should advise his Majesty to give his assent to such a statute would experience the utmost punishment that the severest law of England could inflict for that enormity. Nor should the Irish people be blamed for refusing to acquiesce in a measure which was carried in direct violation of the law, and infraction of the statutes against



bribery and corruption and in defiance of every precept, moral and political

There were times when Mr. Pitt would have lost his head for a title of his Government in Ireland; Stafford was an angel compared to that celebrated statesman.

When the compensation statute had received the royal assent the Viceroy appointed four commissioners to carry its provisions into execution. Three were members of Parliament, whose salaries of £1,200 a year each (with probable advantages) were a tolerable consideration for their former services. The Honorable Mr. Annesley, Secretary Hamilton, and Dr. Duigan were the principal ministers of that extraordinary distribution.

It is, however, to be lamented that the records of the proceedings have been unaccountably disposed of. A voluminous copy of claims, accepted and rejected, was published and partially circulated, but the great and important grants, the private pensions and occult compensations have never been made public further than by those who received them. It is known that

	£	s.	d.
Lord Shannon received for his patronage in the Commons . . . . .	45,000	0	0
The Marquis of Ely . . . . .	45,000	0	0
The Clannorris, besides a Peerage . . . . .	23,000	0	0
Lord Belvidere, besides his douceur . . . . .	15,000	0	0
Sir Hercules Langrishe . . . . .	15,000	0	0

At length, the Parliament being sufficiently arranged to give Government a reasonable assurance of success, Lord Castlereagh determined to feel the impulse of the House of Commons distinctly before he proposed the measure of the Union.

The British Parliament had already framed the terms on which the proposition was to be founded, giving to its own project a complexion of a favor and triumphing by anticipation over the independence of Ireland.

This was a masterpiece of arrogance; and it was determined to try the feelings of the Commons by a negative measure before the insulting one should be substantially propounded to them. The fifteenth day of January, 1800 (the last session of the Irish Parliament), gave rise to a debate of the most acrimonious nature and of great importance.

The speech of Lord Cornwallis from the throne was expected to avow candidly the determination of the Minister to propose, and if possible to achieve a Legislative Union. Every man came prepared to hear that proposal, but a more crafty course was taken by the Secretary.

To the surprise of the Anti-Unionists, the Viceroy's speech did not even hint at the measure, the suggestion of Union was sedulously avoided. Lord Viscount Loftus (now Marquis of Ely) moved the address, which was as vague as the speech was empty. Lord Loftus was another of those young noblemen who were emitted by their connections to mark their politics; but neither the cause nor his Lordship's oration conferred any honor on the author; and his speech would have answered any other subject just as well as that upon which it was uttered.

There was not a point in the Viceroy's speech intended to be debated. Lord Castlereagh, having judiciously collected his flocks, was better enabled to decide on numbers and to count with sufficient certainty on the result of his labors since the preceding session, without any hasty or premature disclosure of his definite measure.

This negative and insidious mode of proceeding, however, could not be permitted by the opposition; and Sir Laurence Parsons, after one of the most able and luminous speeches he had ever uttered, moved an amendment, declaratory of the resolution of Parliament to preserve the Constitution as established in 1782, and to support the freedom and independence of the nation. This motion was the touchstone of the parties; the attendance of the Unionists in the House was compulsory, that of its opponents optional; and on counting the members, sixty-six (about a fifth of the whole) were absent, a most favorable circumstance for the Minister. Every mind was at its stretch, every talent was in its vigor; it was a momentous trial, and never was so general and so deep a sensation felt in any country. Numerous British noblemen and commoners were present at that and the succeeding debate, and they expressed opinions of Irish eloquence which they had never before conceived, nor ever after had an opportunity of appreciating. Every man on that night seemed to be inspired by the subject. Speeches more replete with talent and energy on both sides never were heard in the Irish Senate; it was a vital subject. The sublime, the elo-

quent, the figurative orator, the plain, the connected, the metaphysical reasoner, the classical, the learned, and the solemn declaimer, in a succession of speeches so full of energy and enthusiasm, so interesting in their future, so important in their consequence, created a variety of sensations, even in the bosom of a stranger, and could scarcely fail of exciting some sympathy with a nation which was doomed to close forever that school of eloquence which had so long given character and celebrity to Irish talent.

The debate proceeded with increasing heat and interest till past ten o'clock the ensuing morning (16th). Many members on both sides signalized themselves to an extent that never could have been expected. The result of the convivial resolution at Lord Castlereagh's house was actually exemplified and clearly discernible; an unexampled zeal, an uncongenial energy, an uncalled-for rancor, and an unusual animation broke out from several supporters of Government to an extent which none but those who had known the system Lord Castlereagh had skillfully suggested to his followers could in any way account for. This excess of ardor gave to this debate not only a new and extraordinary variety of language, but an acrimony of invective and an absence of all moderation never before so immoderately practised.

This violence was in unison with the pugnacious project of anticipating the Anti-Unionists in offensive operations, some remarkable instances of that project were actually put into practice, and are not unworthy of being recorded in the Irish chronicles.

Mr Bushe, the late Chief Justice of Ireland, was as nearly devoid of private and public enemies as any man. Endowed with superior talents, he had met with a corresponding success in an ambitious profession and in a jealous country. His eloquence was of the purest kind, but the more delicate the edge the deeper cuts the irony, and his rebukes were of that description; and when embellished by his ridicule, coarse minds might bear them, but the more sensitive ones could not. Mr. Plunket's satire was of a different nature; his weapon cut in every direction, and when once unsheathed little quarter could be expected. His satire was, at times, of that corroding yet witty nature that no patience could endure; yet, on this debate, both these gentlemen were assailed with intrepidity by a person whose talents were despised, and the

price of whose seduction glared in an appointment to the highest office at the Irish bar—a barrister without professional practice or experience, and who was not considered susceptible of black letter. As a statesman he had no capacity, and as an orator he was below even mediocrity, from an embarrassed pronunciation which seemed to render an attempt at elocution a hopeless experiment. Such was Mr. St. George Daly, appointed Prime Sergeant of Ireland in the place of Mr. Fitzgerald, raised over the heads of the Attorney and Solicitor General, and, from a simple briefless advocate elevated to the very highest rank of a talented and learned profession. Mr. Daly, however, was a man of excellent family and common sense, and what was formerly highly esteemed in Ireland, of a “fighting family.” He was the brother of Mr. Denis Daly, of so much talent and of so much reputation amongst the patriots of eighty-two. He was proud enough for his pretensions, and sufficiently conceited for his capacity; and a private gentleman he would have remained had not Lord Castlereagh and the Union placed him in public situations where he had himself too much sense not to feel that he certainly was over-elevated. This gentleman is particularly noticed, as, on this night, he, in some points, overcame the public opinion of his incapacity, and he surprised the House by one of the most clever and severe philippics which had been pronounced during the discussions upon the Union, more remarkable from being directed against two of the most pure and formidable orators in the country.

The contempt with which Mr. Daly conceived his capacity was viewed by the superior members of his profession, the inaptitude he himself felt for the ostensible situation he was placed in, the cutting sarcasms liberally lavished on his inexperience and infirmity, in lampoons and pamphlets, combined to excite an extraordinary exertion to extricate himself from the humiliating taunts that he had been so long experiencing. Mr. Daly’s attack on Mr. Bushe was of a clever description, and had Mr. Bushe had one vulnerable point, his assailant might have prevailed. He next attacked Mr. Plunket, who sat immediately before him; but the materials of his vocabulary had been nearly exhausted; however, he was making some progress when the keen visage of Mr. Plunket was seen to assume a curled sneer which, like a legion offensive and defensive, was prepared for any enemy. No



speech could equal his glance of contempt and ridicule. Mr. Daly received it like an arrow, it pierced him, he faltered like a wounded man, his vocal infirmity became more manifest, and after an embarrassed pause he yielded, changed his ground and attacked by wholesale every member of his own profession who had opposed a Union, and termed them a disaffected and dangerous faction. Here again he received a reply not calculated to please him, and at length he concluded one of the most remarkable speeches, because one the most unexpected, that had been made during the discussion. Every member who had been in the habit of addressing the House, new ones who had never spoken, on that night made warm and several of them eloquent orations.

Mr. Peter Burrows, a veteran advocate for the rights of Ireland, wherever and whenever he had the power of declaring himself, on this night made an able effort to uphold his principles. He was a gentleman of the bar who had many friends, and justly; nothing could be more ungracious than the manner, nothing much better than the matter, of his orations. His mind had ever been too independent to cringe, and his opinions too intractable for an arbitrary minister; on this night he formed a noble and distinguished contrast to those of his own profession, who had sold themselves and the representation for a mess of pottage.

The House had nearly exhausted itself and the subject, when about seven o'clock in the morning an incident the most affecting and unexpected occurred, and which is too precious a relic of Irish Parliamentary chronicles not to be recorded.

The animating presence of Mr. Grattan on this first night of the debate was considered of the utmost importance to the patriots; it was once more raising the standard of liberty in Parliament. He had achieved the independence of his country in 1782, and was the champion best calculated at this crisis to defend it; a union of spirit, of talent, and of honesty gave him an influence above all his contemporaries. He had been ungratefully defamed by the people he had liberated, and, taking the calumny to heart, his spirit had sunk within him, his health had declined, and he had most unwisely seceded in disgust from Parliament at the very moment when he was most required to defend both himself and his country. He seemed fast approaching to the termination of all earthly objects, when he was induced once more to shed his influence over the political crisis.



At that time Mr. Tighe returned the members for the close borough of Wicklow, and, a vacancy having occurred, it was tendered to Mr. Grattan, who would willingly have declined it but for the importunities of his friends.

The Lord Lieutenant and Lord Castlereagh, justly appreciating the effect his presence might have on the first debate, had withheld the writ of election till the last moment the law allowed, and till they conceived it might be too late to return Mr. Grattan in time for the discussion. It was not until the day of the meeting of Parliament that the writ was delivered to the returning officer. By extraordinary exertions, and perhaps by following the example of government in overstraining the law, the election was held immediately on the arrival of the writ; a sufficient number of voters were collected to return Mr. Grattan before midnight. By one o'clock the return was on its road to Dublin, it arrived by five; a party of Mr. Grattan's friends repaired to the private house of the proper officer, and making him get out of bed, compelled him to present the writ to Parliament before seven in the morning, when the House was in warm debate on the Union. A whisper ran through every party that Mr. Grattan was elected and would immediately take his seat. The Ministerialists smiled with incredulous derision, and the opposition thought the news too good to be true.

Mr. Egan was speaking strongly against the measure when Mr. George Ponsonby and Mr. Arthur Moore walked out, and immediately returned, leading, or rather helping, Mr. Grattan, in a state of total feebleness and debility. The effect was electric. Mr. Grattan's illness and a deep chagrin had reduced a form, never symmetrical, and a visage at all times thin, nearly to the appearance of a spectre. As he feebly tottered into the House every member simultaneously rose from his seat. He moved slowly to the table; his languid countenance seemed to revive as he took those oaths that restored him to his pre-eminent station; the smile of inward satisfaction obviously illuminated his features, and reanimation and energy seemed to kindle by the labor of his mind. The House was silent; Mr. Egan did not resume his speech; Mr. Grattan, almost breathless, as if by instinct, attempted to rise, but was unable to stand; he paused and with difficulty requested permission of the House to deliver his sentiments without moving from his seat. This was acceded to

by acclamation, and he who had left his bed of sickness to record, as he thought, his last words in the Parliament of his country kindled gradually till his language glowed with an energy and feeling which he had seldom surpassed. After nearly two hours of the most powerful eloquence he concluded with an undiminished vigor, miraculous to those who were unacquainted with his intellect.

Never did a speech make more affecting impression, but it came too late. Fate had decreed the fall of Ireland, and her patriot came only to witness her overthrow. For two hours he recapitulated all the pledges that England had made and had broken; he went through the great events from 1780 to 1800, proved the more than treachery which had been practised towards the Irish people. He had concluded, and the question was loudly called for, when Lord Castlereagh was perceived earnestly to whisper to Mr. Corry; they for an instant looked round the House, whispered again; Mr. Corry nodded assent, and, amidst the cries of question, he began a speech, which, as far as it regarded Mr. Grattan, few persons in the House could have prevailed upon themselves to utter. Lord Castlereagh was not clear what impression Mr. Grattan's speech might have made upon a few hesitating members; he had, in the course of the debate, moved the question of adjournment; he did not like to meet Sir Lawrence Parsons on his motion, and Mr. Corry commenced certainly an able, but, towards Mr. Grattan, an ungenerous and an unfeeling personal assault; it was useless, it was like an act of a cruel disposition, and he knew it could not be replied to. At length the impatience of the House rendered a division necessary, and in half an hour the fate of Ireland was decided. The numbers were:

For an adjournment Lord Castlereagh had.	138
For the amendment	.. . . . 96
	—
Majority	. . . . . 42

This decision, undoubtedly, gave a death blow to the Irish nation. Many, however, still fostered the hope of success in the opposition, and Lord Castlereagh did not one moment relax his efforts to bribe, to seduce, and to terrify his opponents.

The Anti-Unionists also lost no opportunity of improving their minority, and the next division proved that they had

not. The adjournment was on the 5th of February; the Union propositions, as passed by the British Parliament, were, after a long speech, laid before the House of Commons by Lord Castlereagh. On that day Mr. Bagwell, of Tipperary County, seceded from the Government; the Marquis of Ormonde had also divided it, and the minority appeared to have received numerous acquisitions. Mr. Saurin, Mr. Peter Burns and other prominent gentlemen of the bar now appeared to make the last effort to rescue their country.

Lord Castlereagh, upheld by his last majority, now kept no bounds in his assertions and in his arrogance, and after a debate of the entire night, at eleven the ensuing morning, the division took place. It appeared that the Anti-Unionists had gained ground since the former session, and that there existed 115 members of the Irish Parliament whom neither promotion, nor office, nor fear, nor reward, nor ambition could procure to vote against the independence of their country; though nations fall, that opposition will remain immortal.

Lord Castlereagh's motion was artful in the extreme; he did not move expressly for any adoption of the propositions, but that they should be printed and circulated, with a view to their ultimate adoption.

This was opposed as a virtual acceptance of the subject; on this point the issue was joined, and the Irish nation was on that night laid prostrate. The division was:

Number of members	300
For Lord Castlereagh's motion	158
Against it .. . . .	115
Of members present, majority	43
Absent . . . . .	27

By this division it appears that the Government had a majority of the House of only eight; by their utmost efforts 27 were absent, of whom every man refused to vote for a Union, but did not vote at all, being kept away by different causes, and of consequence eight above a moiety carried the Union, and of the 158 who voted for it in 1800, 28 were notoriously bribed or influenced corruptly.

Although this was ominous to the ultimate fate of the nation, the contest still proceeded with unremitting ardor; numerous debates and numerous divisions took place before the final catastrophe; in numbers the Government made no progress, and never could or did contain a majority of fifty on the principle of a Union.

The details of the subsequent proceedings are not within the range of this desultory memoir. The speech of Mr. Foster, the Speaker, against the measure occupied four hours; a deference to his opinion and a respect for his true patriotism caused a dead silence throughout the entire of his oration. On any other occasion that oration would have been overwhelming, but the question was, in fact, decided before he had in the committee any opportunity of declaring his opinion, and his speech was little more than recording his sentiments.

Some very serious facts occurred during the progress of the discussion which may be worth reciting. The House was surrounded by military, under pretence of keeping the peace, which was not in danger, but, in fact, to excite terror. Lord Castlereagh also threatened to remove the Parliament to Cork if its proceedings were interrupted. But, unfortunately, the Anti-Unionists had no efficient organization, no decided leader; scattered and desponding, they did not excite sufficient external exertion, destiny seemed to resign the nation to its fate; their own brethren forsook them. The Bishops Troy, Lanigan and others deluded the Viceroy, sold their country, and basely betrayed their flocks by promoting the Union; the great body of Catholics were true to their country, but the rebellion had terrified them from every overt act of opposition; all was confusion, nothing could be effected against Lord Castlereagh, who had one million and a half to bribe with, under pretence of compensation, besides the secret-service money of England was at his command, and that was boundless. Had the proposal been made two years later all the wealth and power of England could not have effected the annexation.

The subject is now ended, posterity will appreciate the injuries of Ireland. The only security England has for the permanence of the Union is a radical change in the nature and genius of the people, or a total change of system in the mode of governing. How blind must those Governments be which suppose that Ireland ever can be retained permanently by the coercive system! Eight millions of people whose lives cannot be precious to them never can be permanently yoked to any other nation not much more physically powerful, and not near so warlike, save by a full participation of rights and industry; with employment, protection and any means of



subsistence, the Irish might be the easiest managed people on the face of Europe; naturally loyal, naturally tractable, naturally adapted to labor, it is a total ignorance of their character abroad, with a system of petty tyranny at home, that destroys this people. Governing by executions has the very opposite effect from that intended; death is too common to have much terrors for a desperate peasantry; hang 100,000 every year, it would make no sensible diminution of the Irish population, and certainly would add nothing to the tranquillity of the country. On the contrary, every execution increases the number of the dissatisfied, *who* can be contented with the execution of his kindred? The only guardians of that devoted people, the only persons who could direct or guide them, are now, by the Union, forever taken away from them; their landlords now reside in other countries; no laborers are now employed on the old demesnes that supported them. What are they to subsist upon? An idle population can never cease to be a disturbed one, and if it be possible to convince the English people that the state of Ireland must soon influence their own condition, much will be effected. If England should be convinced that Ireland has been plundered by a British Minister of the only certain means of insuring her tranquillity (a resident Parliament), that the plunder has been without any beneficial operation to England herself, great progress will be made toward some better system. Half the time of the Imperial Parliament is now occupied upon a subject of which nothing but local knowledge can give a competent idea; and it is the opinion of the wisest and most dispassionate people that now reflect upon the state of the connection that either the Union must be rendered closer and more operative for its professed objects, interests must be more amalgamated, and the nations dovetailed together, or the Union be altogether relinquished, the dilemma is momentous, but the alternative is inevitable.

This digression arises from the circumstances which have been mentioned just preceding it. To a true-hearted Irishman it must be a subject of solicitude, but a reflection on 1800 never can arise without exciting emotions of disgust and feelings of indignation.

After a long and ardent but an ineffective struggle the Anti-Unionists gave way entirely, and but little further resistance was offered to anything.



During the progress of the Union bill through the committee a circumstance took place which, with reference to analogous subjects, is of the utmost legal and constitutional consequence and importance.

Mr. Richard Annesley (afterwards Lord Annesley) was called to the chair of the committee, on the motion of Lord Castlereagh, and sat as chairman nearly throughout the entire discussion.

Mr R. Annesley and General Gardner had been returned members for the city of Clogher by the Bishop, whose predecessors had exercised that patronage through the votes of four or five of their own domestics, or, perhaps, of only their steward or chaplain, and in their own hall. On this occasion, however, the Bishop's nomination of Mr. Annesley and General Gardner was opposed by Mr. Charles Ball and Colonel King, as an experiment, at the suggestion of Mr. Plunket. On the election these candidates tendered a number of the resident inhabitants of the district as legal constituents of that ancient city, over which the Bishops had in despotic times assumed a patronage, not only contrary to the inherent rights of franchise, but altogether unconstitutional, it being merely a nomination of members of the Commons by a spiritual Lord. The Bishop's returning officer had, of course, rejected all lay interference, and Mr. Annesley and General Gardner were returned by five or six domestics of the prelate.

This election, however, was most vigorously contested by Mr. Ball and Colonel King; they canvassed the vicinity, informed the landholders of their inherent rights and of the Bishop's usurpation. A great number appeared and tendered their votes for the new candidates, who, in their turn, objected to every vote received for those of the Bishop, and thus circumstanced, the return came back to Parliament.

The Bishop's nominees took their seats as lawful members of Parliament, and as such Mr. Annesley was named chairman to the committee of the whole House, which voted all the details and articles of the Union. Mr. Ball and Colonel King, however, petitioned against that return. A committee was appointed to decide the question; every possible delay was contrived by the Government, and every influence was attempted, even over the members of the committee; nothing was too shameful for the arrogance of the Chancel-

lor (who took a furious part) and the corruption of the Secretary.

After a month of arduous and minute investigation an old document was traced to the Paper Office at the Castle, which the Viceroy endeavored to have suppressed by the keeper of the records. On its production the usurpation of the Bishops was proved beyond all possibility of argument, and Mr. Annesley, through whose voice every clause of the Union had been put and carried, was declared by the House a usurper, and his election and the return thereupon was pronounced null and void. By this decision the whole of the proceedings of the committee had been carried on, through the instrumentality and functions of a person not *de jure* a member of Parliament at the time he so acted. This point, if it had not been then vigorously pushed, must have led to the most serious and deep constitutional questions.

It was the *lex Parliamentaria* that, on an election for a member of Parliament, all votes taken before a returning officer not legally qualified as such, were null and void.

Mr. Charles Ball was excluded from voting against the Union the whole time of Mr. Annesley's so usurping the duties of a member and voting in its favor. Whether his acts could be construed to be legal was a point rendered useless by the certainty of the Union being effected.

Mr. Annesley was in his seat in the House when the report of the committee was read; the effect was considerable. Mr. Annesley and General Gardner instantly rose and left the House, and Mr. Charles Ball and Colonel King were as quickly introduced, dressed in the Anti-Union uniform, and took their seats in the place of the discarded members. A new chairman was substituted for Mr. Annesley.

Another curious instance of palpable corruption remains on record. Sir William Gladowe Newcomen, Bart., member for the county of Longford, in the course of the debate declared he supported the Union, as he was not instructed to the contrary by his constituents. This avowal surprised many, as it was known that the county was nearly unanimous against the measure, and that he was well acquainted with the fact. However, he voted for Lord Castlereagh, and he asserted that conviction alone was his guide; his veracity was doubted and in a few months some of his bribes were published. His wife was also created a peeress.

One of his bribes has been discovered, registered in the Rolls office, a document which it was never supposed would be exposed, but which would have been grounds for impeachment against every member of the Government who thus contributed his aid to plunder the public and corrupt Parliament

The following is a copy from the Rolls office of Ireland:

*By the Lord Lieutenant and General Governor of Ireland,  
Cornwallis*

"Whereas, Sir William Gladowe Newcomen, Bart., hath by his memorial laid before us represented that on the 25th day of June, 1785, John, late Earl of Mayo, then Lord Viscount Naas, Receiver General of Stamp Duties, together with Sir Thomas Newcomen, Bart., and Sir Barry Denny, Bart., both since deceased, as sureties for the said John, Earl of Mayo, executed a bond to his Majesty, conditioning to pay into the treasury the stamp duties received by him; that the said Earl of Mayo continued in the said office of Receiver General until the 30th day of July, 1786, when he resigned the same, at which time it is stated that he was indebted to his Majesty in the sum of about five thousand pounds, and died on the 7th of April, 1793; that the said sureties are dead, and the said Sir Thomas Newcomen, Bart., did by his last will appoint the memorialist executor of his estate; that the memorialist proposed to pay into his Majesty's Exchequer the sum of two thousand pounds as a compensation for any money that might be recovered thereon, upon the estate being released from any further charge on account of the said debt due to his Majesty. And the before-mentioned memorial having been referred to his Majesty's Attorney General for his opinion what would be proper to be done in this matter, and the said Attorney General having by his report unto us, dated the 20th day of August, 1800, advised that, under all the circumstances of the case, the sum of two thousand pounds should be accepted of the memorialist on the part of the Government," etc., etc.

"J. TOLER."

By this abstract it now appears, even by the memorial of Sir William Gladowe, that he was indebted at least five thousand pounds, from the year 1786, to the public treasury and revenue of Ireland; that, with the interest thereon, it amounted in 1800 to ten thousand pounds; that Sir William had as-

sets in his hands, as executor, to pay that debt, and that, on the Union, when all such arrears must have been paid into the Treasury, the Attorney General, under a reference of Lords Cornwallis and Castlereagh, was induced to sanction the transaction as reported, viz.: "under all its circumstances," to forego the debt, except two thousand pounds. Every effort was made to find if any such sum as two thousand pounds was credited to the public, and none such was discovered. The fact is that Lord Naas owed ten thousand pounds, consequently Sir William owed twenty thousand, that he never bona fide paid to the public one shilling, which, with a peerage, the patronage of his county and the pecuniary pickings also received by himself, altogether formed a tolerably strong bribe, even for a more qualmish conscience than that of Sir William.

But all the individual instances of the corrupt influence which seduced so many members of the Irish Parliament to betray their trusts and transmit their names to posterity as the most fatal enemies of that island where they drew their breath, would be a labor of too great an extent for a work of this description. But it will suffice to convince the British Empire that the Union between England and Ireland was the corrupt work of the very minister who was called over with his Irish flock to become the shepherd of the British nation.

The few following authenticated examples of corrupt seduction by Lords Cornwallis and Castlereagh individually may give some slight idea of the general system:

Mr. Francis Knox and Mr. Crowe, two Irish barristers, were returned to Parliament for the close borough of Philipstown, under the patronage of Lord Belvidere. In the session of 1799 they violently opposed the Union. Mr. Knox said: "I am satisfied that in point of commerce England has nothing to give to this country; but, where it otherwise, I would not condescend to argue the subject, for I would not surrender the liberties of my country for the riches of the universe! I cannot find words to express the horror I feel at a proposition so extremely degrading. It is insulting to entertain it, even for a moment. What! Shall we deliberate whether this kingdom shall cease to exist; whether this land shall be struck from the scale of nations; whether its very name is to be erased from the map of the world forever? Shall it,



I say, be a question whether we surrender to another separate country and to another separate legislature the lives, the liberties and the properties of five millions of people who delegated us to defend but not to destroy the constitution? It is a monstrous proposition, and should be considered merely in order to mingle our disgust and execration with those of the people and then to dash it from us, never to be resumed!" Mr Crowe held similar language.

The Earl of Belvidere then called a meeting of the county of Westmeath to enter into resolutions against the Union, and his proposed resolutions, in his own handwriting, declaratory of his resistance to that measure, are here inserted. Mr. Crowe termed its supporters "flagitious culprits," and boldly declaimed against the unexampled profligacy of the Viceroy and his Irish Secretary. It is fortunate for history that irrefragable proofs exist of this statement, and that Great Britain may pursue the mode by which Ireland has been united to her. Every line of such documents might well form a ground of prosecution or impeachment for high crimes and misdemeanors against both the Viceroy and the Secretary.

The Earl of Belvidere and his two friends had expressed themselves too strongly against the Union, and were of too much importance to be left untempted. The Marquis, therefore, undertook to manage the Peer, whilst Lord Castlereagh engaged to seduce the Commoners. Mr. Usher, the Earl's chaplain, wise man and adviser, was also enlisted to effect the seduction of his patron and of his accessories. The negotiation completely succeeded.

The English nation will scarcely believe the fact that, within a few months, his Lordship, with Mr. Knox and Mr. Crowe, were literally purchased, and in four months after publishing the resolutions in favor of the measure were circulated by his Lordship among his tenantry. As soon as the bribe was fixed, as he conceived, the whole of his Lordship's former principles were recanted and condemned as hasty and against the general opinion of the people.

Lord Cornwallis had now gained his point, and turned round on the apostates; they were disgraced traitors; they were now helpless; they durst not again recant. The terms had been munificent; nothing required by Lord Belvidere had been refused by the Marquis; but after he had made their



defection public and irrevocable he gave his Lordship to understand that there was a misconception as to the terms, which, being matters of detail, could be more properly arranged by the Secretary; and thus he turned them over to the mercy of Lord Castlereagh. His Lordship, seeing they were entrapped beyond the power of escaping, soon convinced them that he also knew how to despise the instruments he had corrupted. Mr. Usher, the chaplain, was to be remunerated for soothing the conscience of Lord Belvidere; the clergy are seldom reluctant when good bargains are going forward, but a general dissatisfaction now arose among all the parties. Usher, however, was contented; he got a cure of souls for his political guilt, and, after having aided in corruption, went to preach purity to his parishioners!

The English people would scarcely credit the most accurate historian, did not the annexed letter prove the whole transaction and leave them to ruminate upon the nefarious system to which they were themselves subject, under the same minister. In England an impeachment would have been the result of this disclosure, but in Ireland it was the least of Lord Castlereagh's malpractices.

Mr. Crowe's letter, shortly after Lord Belvidere was purchased by Lord Cornwallis:

"October 4th, 1799.

*"My Dear Lord*—This moment yours of the 3rd inst. has been delivered by the postman. I am heartily concerned that I am obliged to differ with your Lordship (for the first time during a three and twenty years' friendship) in point of fact: as to what passed between Lord Cornwallis it has nothing to do with the present question, which is simply 'whether the agreement made by Mr. Knox with Lord Castlereagh is to be adhered to or violated.' This agreement was two months subsequent to your conversation with Lord Cornwallis, and you will recollect you had two interviews with the Viceroy, the latter of which was by no means so flattering as the first, and was very far from holding out splendid expectations, but all prior discussions are always done away by a subsequent agreement, for otherwise it would be absurd ever to think of making one, which would always be open to be departed from by any of the parties on a suggestion that in a prior conversation this thing was said or the other thing was done. 'An agreement once made, nothing remains but

to carry it into effect according to its terms as fast as possible. The business then comes to this, what was the agreement made by Mr. Knox with Lord Castlereagh respecting the only point that has induced your Lordship to delay matters, all the rest being confessedly understood, namely, 'the vacating Mr. Knox's seat and mine in order to give the return of the two members to Government in our places.'

"This particular Mr. Knox stated distinctly and explicitly that Lord Castlereagh, at the outset of the negotiation, laid it down as a *sine qua non* that we must vacate our seats in the present Parliament, and that he should have the nomination of the two new members. But such a distinction as your Lordship conceives of vacating for the question of Union, and in case Government should be defeated on that measure, that those two new members should vacate, and that you should have a power of nominating in their stead the remainder of the Parliament, never in the slightest degree was made by Mr. Knox, nor even by your Lordship; but, on the contrary, your Lordship assented to that part as well as to every other part of the treaty with Lord Castlereagh, and from the instant you thus gave your assent a full, complete and perfect agreement took place. Mr. Usher was present at all this, and it is his duty to come forward and declare the fact.

"On the 10th of July this negotiation commenced, and from that period to this I have been kept in town from my concerns in law, in constant expectation of having it concluded, and now, nearly at the end of three months, to have it all upset is very severe.

"As to the engagement that your Lordship describes and that your burgesses signed, it is a direct contradiction to that part of the agreement it professes to be conformable to, and is so much trouble for nothing, but what appears extraordinary to me, along with all the rest of this extraordinary business, is that your Lordship should prepare or get this engagement signed after you were apprised, both by Mr. Knox's letters and mine to you and Mr. Usher, that anything short of the identical paper sent down by Mr. Knox would not answer. I have nothing more to add than to request your Lordship will bring Mr. Usher up with you directly.

"I am, my dear Lord, Yours most sincerely,

"ROB. CROWE."

"To the Earl of Belvidere," etc., etc.

## RESOLUTIONS.

In the handwriting of the Earl of Belvidere, prepared by him for the Freeholders of the County of Westmeath, against a Legislative Union in 1799. His Lordship afterwards voted for and supported that measure warmly.

“Resolved, That the free and independent Legislature of Ireland having been unequivocally established, every measure that tends to encroach on it calls for our implicit disapprobation.

The depending project of a Union with Great Britain, the appearance of being merely a transfer of the Parliament, is, in fact, a complete extinction of it; that it is the duty of Irishmen of every description to come forward and by all constitutional means to resist a scheme so subversive of the real interest, prosperity and dignity of their country.

That we entertain too high an opinion of the integrity of our representatives to suppose them capable of voting away the rights of the people, had a power of such nature been ever invested in them.”

This transaction between Lord Cornwallis and Castle-reagh, and Lord Belvidere and Messrs. Knox and Crowe, ought to be one of the most useful lessons to the British nation; there will be seen in the sad fate of Ireland the means by which their own liberties may be destroyed.

Before the third reading of the bill, when it was about to be reported, Mr. Charles Ball, member for Clogher, rose and, without speaking one word, looked around impressively; every eye was directed to him, he only pointed his hand significantly to the bar and immediately walked forth, casting a parting look behind him and turning his eyes to Heaven, as if to invoke vengeance on the enemies of his country. His example was contagious. Those anti-Unionists who were in the House immediately followed his example, and never returned into that Senate which had been the glory, the guardian, and the protection of their country. There was but one scene more and the curtain was to drop forever.

The day of extinguishing the liberties of Ireland had now arrived and the sun took his last view of an independent Ireland; he rose no more over a proud and prosperous nation. She was now condemned by the British Minister to renounce her rank amongst the States of Europe, she was sentenced

to cancel her constitution, to disband her Commons, and disfranchise her nobility, to proclaim her incapacity, and register her corruption in the records of the empire. On this fatal event some whose honesty the tempter could not destroy, some whose honor he dare not assail, and many who could not control the useless language of indignation, prudently withdrew from a scene where they would have witnessed the downfall of their country. Every precaution was taken by Lord Clare for the security, at least, of his own person. The Houses of Parliament were closely invested by the military. No demonstration of popular feeling was permitted. A British regiment near the entrance patrolled through the Ionic colonnades. The chaste architecture of that classic structure seemed as a monument to the falling Irish, to remind them of what they had been and to tell them what they were. It was a heart-rending sight to those who loved their country; it was a sting to those who sold it, and to those who purchased it, a victory; but to none has it been a triumph. Thirty-three years of miserable experience should now convince the British people that they have gained neither strength, nor affection, nor tranquillity by their acquisition, and that if population be the "wealth of nations," Ireland is getting far too rich to be governed much longer as a pauper.

The British people knew not the true history of the Union, that the brilliant promises, the predictions of rapid prosperity and "consolidating resources" were but chimerical. Whilst the finest principles of the constitution were sapped to effect the measure, England, by the subjugation of her sister kingdom, gained only an accumulation of debt, an accession of venality to her Parliament, an embarrassment in her councils, and a prospective danger to the integrity of the empire. The name of Union has been acquired, but the attainment of the substance has been removed farther than ever.

The Commons House of Parliament, on the last evening afforded the most melancholy example of a fine, independent people, betrayed, divided, sold, and, as a State, annihilated. British clerks and officers were smuggled into her Parliament to vote away the constitution of a country to which they were strangers, and in which they had neither interest nor connection. They were employed to cancel the royal charter of the Irish nation, guaranteed by the British Gov-



ernment, sanctioned by the British legislature, and unequivocally confirmed by the words, the signature, and the great seal of their monarch.

The situation of the Speaker on that night was of the most distressing nature; a sincere and ardent enemy of the measure, he headed its opponents; he resisted it with all the power of his mind, the resources of his experience, his influence and his eloquence.

It was, however, through his voice that it was to be proclaimed and consummated. His only alternative (resignation) would have been unavailing, and could have added nothing to his character. His expressive countenance bespoke the inquietude of his feeling, solicitude was perceptible in every glance, and his embarrassment was obvious in every word he uttered.

The galleries were full, but the change was lamentable; they were no longer crowded with those who had been accustomed to witness the eloquence and to animate the debates of that devoted assembly. A monotonous and melancholy murmur ran through the benches, scarcely a word was exchanged amongst the members, nobody seemed at ease, no cheerfulness was apparent, and the ordinary business for a short time proceeded in the usual manner.

At length the expected moment arrived, the order of the day for the third reading of the bill, for a "Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland," was moved by Lord Castlereagh, unvaried, tame, cold-blooded, the words seemed frozen as they issued from his lips, and, as if a simple citizen of the world, he seemed to have no sensation on the subject.

At that moment he had no country, no god but his ambition; he made his motion and resumed his seat with the utmost composure and indifference.

Confused murmurs again ran through the House; it was visibly affected; every character in a moment seemed involuntarily rushing to its index, some pale, some flushed, some agitated; there were few countenances to which the heart did not dispatch some messenger. Several members withdrew before the question could be repeated, and an awful momentary silence succeeded their departure. The Speaker rose slowly from that chair which had been the proud source of his honors, and of his high character; for a moment he



resumed his seat, but the strength of his mind sustained him in his duty, though his struggle was apparent. With that dignity which never failed to signalize his official actions he held up the bill for a moment in silence; he looked steadily around him on the last agony of the expiring Parliament. He at length repeated in an emphatic tone, "As many as are of opinion that THIS BILL do pass, say aye." The affirmative was languid but indisputable; another momentary pause ensued, again his lips seemed to decline their office; at length, with an eye averted from the object which he hated, he proclaimed, with a subdued voice, "THE AYES HAVE IT."

The fatal sentence was now pronounced; for an instant he stood statue-like; then indignantly, and with disgust, flung the bill upon the table and sank into his chair with an exhausted spirit. An independent country was thus degraded into a province; Ireland, as a nation, was EXTINGUISHED.



Ornament on top of Devenish Round Tower.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers," 400.

SECTION V.

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THE MEN WHO DIED  
FOR IRELAND IN '48 AND '67

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O'NEILL CROWLEY'S LAST STAND

BY

M A MANNING, First Editor, Dublin Weekly Independent

CONTAINING

A GRAPHIC AND PICTURESQUE ACCOUNT OF THE FENIAN  
DAYS IN IRELAND







DANIEL O'CONNELL,  
The Liberator Who Won Catholic Emancipation.



# THE MEN WHO DIED FOR IRELAND IN '48 AND '67.

BY M. A. MANNING, FIRST EDITOR, DUBLIN WEEKLY  
INDEPENDENT.

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## INTRODUCTORY.

DANIEL O'CONNELL had won Catholic Emancipation at a large price—the sacrifice of the Forty Shilling Freeholders; but even at such a price, Catholic Emancipation meant a great deal to Ireland, and earned for O'Connell the proud title of “Liberator.” The tithes still existed, however, and the Protestant clergymen of the established church, assisted by the soldiers and police, compelled the Catholic people to deliver to them a share of the products of their farms. O'Connell's attempts in Parliament to abolish this unjust and unreasonable system came to naught. It remained for the men of Kilkenny “in the narrow boreen at Carrickshock” to deal a deathblow to the Tithes Act, and well and fearlessly they did it.

When Mitchell, Davis, Dillon and Duffy came upon the scene and began to preach the doctrines that culminated in the abortive rising of '48, O'Connell's power began to wane, and he was no longer an important factor in Irish politics. The story of '48 has been told so often in song and story that the compilers feel it would be superfluous to include it in this work. It is their purpose to preserve for the Irish people and their descendants in America some of the things that are in danger of being lost, and to add many things more that have not been touched upon already. Hence the prominence given in the book to several new articles on new subjects as well as to the accounts of the Wexford Rebellion and the history of Grattan's Parliament, both books being now out of print.

The thrilling narrative of the Fenian movement, centering around the heroic O'Neill Crowley, is given as a sample of the sacrifices and patriotism of the men of that period—

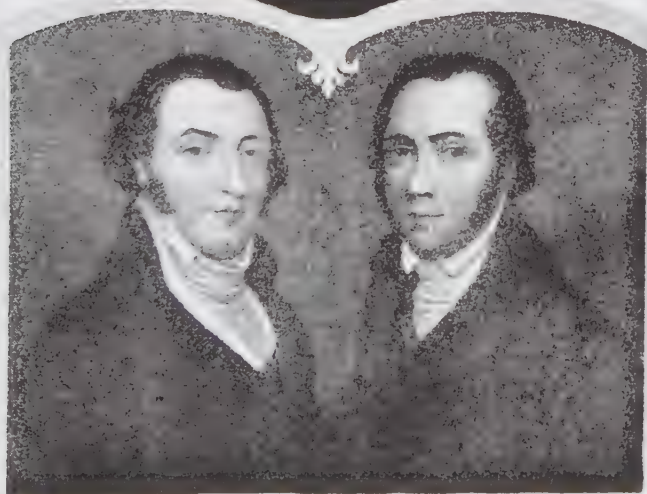
Stephens, Kickham, O'Leary, the Sheares brothers, Allen, Larkin, O'Brien and scores of others. It is one of the most beautifully written stories of an Irish Revolutionary movement that has ever been given to the public. It is impossible for an Irishman to read it without becoming a more ardent patriot and truer friend of liberty than he was before.

As regards Emmet and Tone, it may be said that their efforts for Irish freedom are known to every man, woman and child of the Irish race to-day, and annually meetings are held in their honor at which their exploits are extolled and their principles adopted. Hence, any lengthened account of the part which they took in the fight for the independence of Ireland would not be new, and, it seems to us, at the present time is unnecessary. But, in another section, Emmet's immortal speech from the dock will be found in full. It gives a better insight into his character and motives than any biography, however excellent, could supply. P. F. HOLDEN.



Composed from the Book of Kells.





## CHAPTER I.

O'NEILL CROWLEY'S LAST STAND "FOR IRELAND"—BY M. A. MANNING, FIRST EDITOR OF THE DUBLIN WEEKLY INDEPENDENT.

In the very southeast of Cork county, a mile or so inland from the bold cliffs that stand eternal sentinel at the entrance to Youghal Harbor, is the little village of Ballymacoda. Just one street of low-roofed, tidy houses and the village church, built on the rising ground, solid and unpicturesque. All around are green fields, and here and there clusters of firs and young oaks. 'Tis a fair country around this quiet village, no broad rivers or tall mountains, no hillsides with golden gorse and purple heather, no background like the frowning Comeraghs or the grey hills that frame the Golden Vale of Tipperary, but yet a fair country—a fair, green old land, where Irishmen and Irishwomen might live in gentle peace and in quiet. An old historic country, too, this stretch of land from Glanmire to Knockadoon, with its traditions of bloody massacres and burnings, incursions and devastations. Storm-beaten and shattered on many a surrounding hill, silhouetted against the sky, grim even in their desolation and decay, stand the broken walls of many a castle-fortress and the grey ruins of many a watch-tower. The winds that blow from the sea sigh through the hollow keeps; but on wild nights, when the roar of the distant ocean is heard like the moan of a man, and the sea spume is carried inland, the hoarse winds howl as they hurry through the ruined halls, tearing the ivy from crumbling stones, and oftentimes wrenching great mullions from the walls and dashing them down in mad fury, just as if the spirits of the old lords rode on the tempests and were furious at these headstones to their fallen fortunes.

In the chapel grounds are two monuments, things of stone, but beautiful in their simplicity, telling a pathetic and terrible tale. One, time-stained, weather-worn, enclosed with iron railings, the enclosure overrun with sweetbriar and ivy; the other more modern, tall and stately, standing erect and proud, as if challenging the verdict of all men on him who sleeps below. The first marks the place where were laid the bones



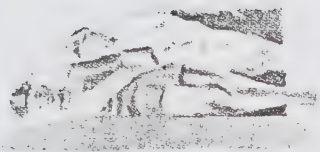
of Father Peter O'Neill, the poor priest the English Christians flogged as a rebel through the streets of Cork in '98; and beneath the other was buried the corpse of O'Neill Crowley, who died on the slopes of Kilclooney Wood in '67, with an English bullet in his heart.

Facing the east, let into the base of a glorious Celtic cross, is a panel, on which is graven the brief record of a man's life in the language of the country in which he lived and for whose freedom he died; and when the sun dies amid the blood-red glory of the west it lights up the same record graven in the tongue of the men who slew him.

Erected by the Irish People  
To the memory of the patriot,  
PETER O'NEILL CROWLEY,  
Who was shot down by the British Soldiery  
whilst bravely fighting  
For his country's independence  
At Kilclooney Wood, March 31, 1867,  
in the 35th year of his age.  
R. I. P.—Amen.







DEATH OF LORD EDWARD FITZGERALD.

## CHAPTER II.

He was born here in Ballymacoda on the 23rd of May, 1832, in a homely two-storied thatched house just above the church, on the brow of the hill. His father was a rebel before him, and took up arms in '98, when the nation could no longer bear its martyrdom. He lived a proscribed rebel for many a year, with a price upon his head. And the old priest, Crowley's uncle, after whom he was named, he, too, served God and loved his land. And he was tied to a triangle and flogged like a dog, was this young priest, flayed by these Saxon Gospellers, scourged until the bones stood bare through his torn flesh, until his blood made pools on the barrack ground. Ah, it came kindly to this man who sleeps by the old priest's side in Ballymacoda to hate these English as only goodly men can hate and to die as a goodly man should die—with his face to the foe and his life-blood welling from his side.

A silent man, a man gentle and kindly, never loud voiced; he went among his fellow men and told of the dawning of a bright day for Ireland, and people came and listened to him and wondered and believed. And his sister, a woman of deep resolution, who loved him dearly, an Irishwoman who felt as he felt, but held her peace, had the burden placed upon her of managing his affairs, for he went about from place to place and his home often missed him for weeks together. He was keenly alive to the responsibilities and dangers of the movement which he encouraged the people to join, but he felt it a sacred duty to free his land, and deemed her liberty the heritage of her sons.

Often when returning by the cliff roads to his home on some clear night when the mists rolled seaward, he could see, afar off, shining like a star in the east, the gleam of the Hook Light on the Wexford coast. To him it seemed a beacon, warning and beckoning. Afar off truly, but it marked the ground where brave men had once fought and died for Ireland, and he would raise aloft his clenched and trembling hands and swear to strike a blow as did the Shilmalier in '98—and well he kept his vow.

### CHAPTER III.

The Fenian movement grew and developed, and nowhere did it take a firmer hold than in East Cork. Midleton had a muster roll of five hundred men and every parish and every village had its sworn contingent. Early in '67 Irish hearts beat high with courage and hope and Young Ireland panted for the day of reckoning. Its sad, sad ending and the terrible betrayals are matters of history. We deal only with one tragic incident that is an epitome of pity and of heroism.

Captain McClure, a young American born at Dobb's Ferry, about fifty miles from New York City, and who served with distinction in the American war, retiring at the termination of that terrible struggle with the rank of Brevet Captain of Cavalry, offered his sword to the service of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. He was born of Irish parents, and had heard from his father stories of the Old Land that had set his young blood coursing wildly through his veins, and made him pray for the time when, amid the glitter of steel and the smoke of battle, the freedom of Ireland might be won. He hoped and dreamed as did O'Neill Crowley, and they stood together in the fatal wood. He sailed from America early in '67 and landed in Glasgow; journeyed from thence to Liverpool, and proceeded to Cork, where he was charged with the control and organization of the Midleton district. Then he met Crowley, recognized in him the stuff of which heroes are made, and trusted him. Crowley, on the other hand, perceived in this dark-featured, square-built man, short of stature, but active and daring, one to be relied upon in danger, quick to act and strike.

How McClure's soul must have sickened; how his heart must have grown leaden with despair when he found his hopes shattered. No arms, no stores, no ammunition; nothing but men, ready and willing, Irishmen who patiently waited and blindly trusted. Nothing—when he was led to believe he would be met with a disciplined force, rifles in their hands and cartridges in their pouches.





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## CHAPTER IV.

Tuesday, the 5th day of March, 1867. The dawn of a bitter day for Ireland. True to his oath, O'Neill Crowley took his place at the head of his contingent and captured and sacked the coast-guard station at Knockadoon, a few short miles from Ballymacoda. The Midleton contingent, numbering many hundreds, was to form a junction with Crowley's force. They marched out of the town and, under the command of Timothy Daly, attacked the police patrol, demanding their arms. A skirmish ensued, in which a sergeant lost his life, and the Constabulary hastily retired. Thence on to the Youghal crossroads, where they were to meet Crowley and place themselves under the direction of Corydon, who was to have come from Cork that day to take up the chief command of the forces in this part of County Cork. But no Corydon came; Corydon, informer and spy, dealer in men's lives, betrayer of his country and her cause, had already played the Judas. McClure saw all too clearly the criminal folly of keeping his body of men together. He felt they were betrayed, and they had no adequate arms or ammunition. He acted promptly. He gave the order to disperse to their homes.

But there were some there who, in their wild despair, in the agony of betrayal, would not go tamely back. Daly pushed on to Castlemartyr, a long and weary march, and attacked the police barracks there. His companions dragged a cart of hay across the road close by the barracks, and, using it as a cover, opened fire. They were answered by volley after volley, and Daly, receiving his death wound, staggered a few paces and fell dead with a bullet in his breast. His body was borne to his home in Chapel road, in Midleton, and there they kneeled over him and prayed and lit the death candles. And armed men, representing the might of Britain, stood beside the corpse, men with set faces and grounded rifles, guarding the dead.

And to-day there stands in Killeagh Churchyard a great Celtic cross raised to his memory, a tribute to a man of the people who stood forth from the ranks and died.

## CHAPTER V.

O'Neill Crowley knew there would be a price set upon the head of the young American who had crossed the seas to help them. So he determined to stand by him; he believed it to be his duty. Accompanied by a few daring and resolute men, they set out to march across the county of Cork, hoping all along that the Fenian rising had not been a failure in Mitchelstown district and South Tipperary; hoping against hope that they would in those places find others to join with them and make a last stand in the passes of the Galtee Mountains or the hillsides that look down on the valley of Aherlow.

Stealthily they marched by night—here receiving word of the flying columns that scoured the country; there avoiding places where troops were hastily gathered together, having many a hair-breadth escape and many a tragic adventure. But Crowley came from a countryside that bred never an informer, and his courage was unflagging. And all hope was not crushed. The Corydon betrayal could only be a single instance of infamy. Irishmen could not be such traitors. Alas and alas!

And the peasants opened their doors to them and bade them welcome and gave them food and shelter, and prayed God be with them when they left in the darkness of the cold March night. On and on to the Galtees that now stood out dark and lonely before them. And many a Munster peasant who gave them succor was arrested and threatened and cajoled and wheedled and offered golden bribes, but they spake not a word, these Munster peasants. And Crowley and McClure and their handful of followers arrived weary and travel-worn at the grove of Ballymacourty, a few miles north of Kilelooney Wood. Here, too, the same story. Strong men, fearless men, ready to take the field, but no arms, no organization. The day of rising found them utterly undisciplined—an enrolled and unarmed army. If it had been otherwise Ireland could boast her Bannockburn.







LORD EDWARD FITZGERALD



THEOBALD WOLFE TONE

## CHAPTER VI.

The authorities were mightily scared. They were face to face with a terrible danger. Informer after informer—Irishmen all of them—God forgive them!—trooped into Dublin Castle and into every police barrack throughout the country. The Executive began to realize the extent of the conspiracy and rebellion that had only missed fire. Mounted Constabulary had been sent to the disaffected districts early in the month, with instructions to learn the lie of the land in order to act as guides to the flying columns when necessary. Troops were hastily transported to those centers where the authorities knew the ashes were smouldering, and where the flames might break out afresh with the lightest breath. Ah! well the Government knew where to mass the redcoats, for the informer had done his work silently and well. In the great barracks at Mitchelstown were several companies of the Cork Regiment of the line, together with a vast force of police, and Neil Brown, the Resident Magistrate, was there, and he was exceedingly busy. For every night came men, close wrapped and muffled up; and they were hastily shown into his private office, and they stayed with him for hours. In the darkness they came and in the darkness they stole away, glancing uneasily about, fearful of being recognized. For they came with a story that ever commanded a price; they earned blood money. Men—it seems such a woeful pity to call them men—things mean of soul, creeping things, these spies and traitors who hunted down their own flesh and blood for a handful of money.

And in the early dawn mounted men, armed and ready, would ride forth from the barrack gates and off to some farmstead or wooded knoll, only to find their quarry flown. For if the informers were watchful so were the poor peasants, whose eyes were sharp and keen, and who loved these hunted outlaws. Once the troopers, acting on sure information, surrounded Ballymacourty Wood in the early morning and searched every nook and dell. They discovered swords and three rifles, abandoned by McClure's party in their hurried retreat. They were late, were these trained troopers; the

poor people saw them coming and baffled them. Again they entered the house of a man named Lee. A few moments ere they came he was entertaining eight of the rebels. Neil Brown found the plates upon the table and counted them; but not a word would pass Lee's lips, although the magistrate stormed and raved and threatened. For all peasants were not cowards, Neil Brown! Again were Crowley and McClure in Kirk's house and in other neighbors' places, and the authorities could not seize them—they always came too late. From house to house, from wood to wood were the rebels driven, spied upon, informed upon, tracked and hunted, but never captured.

They might have dispersed now, this small band of daring men, and have gone back to their homes; but the hope grew that all this struggle would surely come to something, and the hope became a belief and then a conviction. And the fame of the stand they were making spread throughout the country and the people began to hope again. And promises of aid and reinforcements were secretly brought to them. Then did McClure and Crowley appoint Sunday, the 31st of March, as the day on which these soldiers of Ireland would meet if a blow was to be struck in real earnestness. The time was to be at the dawning of the day. The place was to be Kilelooney Wood. And they waited patiently for that morning—and so did the English garrison in Mitchelstown.

## CHAPTER VII.

Killelooney Wood covers a rising ground, a steep slope. 'Around the base winds the Ahaphooka, a mountain stream, a tributary of the Funchion. It rises about six miles higher up in Glenoisin, or Glenisheen; that is, the Vale of Oisin, for in Munster they pronounce it "Isheen." It sings its way through Glen Rue, the Red Glen, named from the color of its bright furze, or, as some say, because of the blood that was shed in the many battles fought there in the far-off days of Finn and his companions. The brow of the wood is circled by the Kildorrery road, and facing it on the other side of the stream is a high plateau. A regular trap—a trap when once in it, it was hard to escape. The trees were planted about 30 years previous to the date we write of, and the underwood was sparse and thin. Even now the place would afford meagre protection to any body of men—the trees are too thinly planted and its position and general character render it a wretched spot for either shelter or concealment. It was, however, selected by McClure for neither purpose; it was an appointed meeting place, nothing more. A quantity of the timber had lately been felled, but thirty years ago the wood covered about seven acres and was some six hundred yards in length, the depth from the roadway to the stream at the bottom varying from 70 to 100 yards. The surface of the ground is extremely regular, no mound or hollow to afford means of concealment or protection against British bullets. By the roadside, above the wood, stand a few farm houses. In one there lives to-day, as there did on the 31st of March, 1867, a man named John Hennessy. In another was a family named Hanley. For nearly thirty years has that old man, John Hennessy, lived under the fearful stigma of being the wretch who sold Crowley to the English Government. And to-day we lift the shadow from his life. Mary Hanley, who was but a girl then, will tell her story bye and bye.

## CHAPTER VIII.

The plantation is on the Kingston estate, a family that is practically extinct. A curious family, these Kingstons. Anna, the last Countess of Kingston, remarried to a commoner, lives to-day bereft of the family estates. The broad acres have long since been mawed by the money-lender and the mortgagee. She lives in the great castle that cost hundreds of thousands of pounds to erect, fenced in by the demesne wall, a great seven-mile circle of stone and mortar. In the days of the Volunteers a Viscount Kingston raised a troop of Yeomen. But as times changed we find Captain Viscount Kingsborough in '98 commanding the Mitchelstown Yeomanry Cavalry, "who were admirably expert in cutting down the unarmed peasantry." In '98 a Colonel Kingston was captured by the Wexford rebels, and his life was spared on the intercession of a priest who knew him well. "Who will give me safe conduct through your lines and lead me to the Royalist camp?" asked this Kingston. "I will," spoke up the rebel priest, "if you guarantee my return." And Kingston swore a mighty oath that no harm would come to him. They passed the lines and entered the King's camp. And the English soldiers seized the rebel priest and bound him. "What mean you!" he cried out, "has not Kingston given me his plighted word?" "Have you it in writing?" sneered the gentleman who wore King George's scarlet. And he, this Kingston threw the rope around the rebel's throat and went forth from him. And they hanged that priest gallows-high. And bye and bye came that Kingston, and he glanced up and saw the dead face and the staring, open eyes of him he had betrayed, and he laughed and passed on, saying "God save the King!"

These yeomen colonels and perjured King's men have long since passed away, and Anna, the last Countess, lives her dreary life in the great castle. Strange, is it not, that the Roches and the Condons and all the others who were despoiled of their lands still live on in the town of the Mitchels, whilst *their* house has fallen and their sun has set.



## CHAPTER IX.

Sometimes outlaws lay in the woods and changed from place to place, baffling the authorities by the rapidity of their movements. It was on the Tuesday before the 31st of March that Crowley determined to venture on a journey to Cork city. The risk was great, but the stake he played for was greater. It was absolutely necessary for the success of McClure's plans that he should open up communication with some of the faithful men in the Rebel City, and, above all, to procure the means to purchase stores and requisites—indispensable necessities should their schemes develop. Crowley, disguised as a laborer or carrier, made his way to the city and was seen there and recognized on the Thursday. As suddenly and mysteriously as he appeared, as suddenly and mysteriously did he disappear. There is ample evidence to prove that the agent whom Crowley believed would have a substantial sum of money to place at his disposal was not found by him, or that the expected assistance was not available or had miscarried. He set out on his return journey to keep his tryst in Kilclooney Wood on the following Sunday. On nearing Mitchelstown he learned that the troops had made a descent on the Ballymacourty plantation, dispersing McClure's party, who were so anxiously awaiting his return. Grasping the situation, he acted with promptitude. He had word conveyed to McClure that he would rest that night in Hanley's house, the dwelling already referred to, and there he would expect to be joined by him ere daybreak. It was a long and weary foot-march he made that Saturday. A few of the men who had warned him of the military raid on Ballmacourty refused to leave him until they saw him safe in Hanley's house. The utmost caution was necessary, as mounted patrols were scouring the roads. In the twilight silently the outlaws moved along, noiselessly, like shadows. Now taking to the fields, now crossing a borheen. Suddenly the regular beat of hoofs, the jangle of scabbards, and the glitter of sabres. Hurriedly the few rebels crouch beneath the shadow of a thick hedge and wait. They can hear their own breathing as the troop halts. A whispered word of com-

mand and some of the cavalry dismount and enter the very field where their prey lie crouched and waiting. In the silence, the click of a rifle hammer. As the horses form in line on the road beyond the steam rises from their flanks, for they have ridden hard and fast that day. The dismounted men beat about, their carbines in their hands, ready and expectant. They come within a few yards of the deep shadow. A few steps more and there is death in store for many a man. One cries out that the field is tenantless as a church, and they retire, mount their horses and ride away. And as their figures vanish in the gathering gloom Crowley breathes a deep breath and returns his revolver to his belt. He is glad, for he has work to do to-morrow.

On once more, until their figures merge into the darkness that now hangs like a pall over the wood of Kilclooney. A single light burns in the window of Hanley's dwelling. A few hurried words, a grasp or two of the hand, and Crowley is alone. He knocks at the door, it opens and Mary Hanley bids him enter. "God be with you!" she says, and Crowley says "Amen." The door closes, the window is darkened, and the silence is unbroken save by the night winds that moan a dirge among the solemn aisles of bare trees in the wood outside.



Composed from Book of Kells.

## CHAPTER X.

A few hundred yards from this spot, in a small, one-storied, thatched public house, lived Edward Coffey. Beside the gates of the chapel of Shraherla he lived, and there, too, he died. A man that found it hard to make ends meet, although he had had neither wife nor child to burden him. It was a general shop, this house of Coffey's, and two girls were there who managed the business and attended to household affairs. As people dropped in to buy some trifle and gossip about the stirring times, or wonder at the incessant coming and going of the troops, or talk in whispers of the courage and daring of the men who seemed to bear a charmed life, Coffey would listen, but speak nothing. Bye and bye there were strange stories of money offered by the authorities in Mitchelstown for reliable information of Crowley and McClure's movements, and dark hints were thrown out that many a one who kept a high head in the parish was no better than Corydon himself. When the money was mentioned Coffey's eyes would glisten with avarice—and he kept on listening and pondering. Then he began to think that he might as well share the blood-money as another. And what he did not hear the girls picked up; and when no one was by he worried out of them what they had heard. At first they never suspected him, but later on they knew.

With bated breath it was told how the Fenians were to meet in the Wood on the next Sunday; how four or five hundred at the very least were expected to muster; how Crowley was in Cork, and how he would return—none knew with what. That the likely place for him to stay was in one of the houses over the hill beyond.

Then Coffey made up his mind, stole out of the house in the darkness, and sped away to Mitchelstown. To the barracks he went; he never faltered. The night had fallen, not a soul in the streets of the sleeping town. Not a thought of the damning treason of his crime stayed him as he sped. He would bargain for a good price; already he heard the clink and saw the glitter of the blood-money.

That night he stayed long with Neil Brown, closeted in

his private office. Low were the voices—so low that the orderly outside could scarce hear the murmur of the bargain and the betrayal. Yes, next Sunday was the day, and the dawn was the hour. Neil Brown got what he wanted and Edward Coffey slunk away. Back to his home by the gates of the Chapel of Shraherla, back to live for aye with a guilty secret, and he never once suspected through the after years that John Hennessy bore the stigma of his treason and his crime.

Let us be done with this man. Shortly after Coffey was paid one hundred pounds in the National Bank at Mitchelstown. The money was paid to him by Edward O'Brien, J. P., the then manager of the branch. It was his price. He also received a small sum for the two girls. It was his bargain. After this they went to America and have been lost sight of. One is still remembered as the "red-haired girl named McGrath that used to be in Coffey's years ago." Their exact share in this terrible transaction will probably never be known.

But Coffey—the money was ill-gotten; he did not thrive. When the girls went away things went from bad to worse with him. He sold the public house, retaining for his own use only a wretched out-office. He began to drink heavily and shrank from mixing with the people. One night, just five or six years ago, he lay down on his wretched pallet of straw and covered himself with a few rags, his only warmth. Hours afterwards the moon shone out, and the light stole in and lit upon a clenched hand that lay outside the covering. And the beam crept up and up, until it shone white and cold upon a rigid face with dropped jaws and sunken eyes and hollow cheeks. And a day passed. And then they broke in the door and found him as he had been for many an hour, dead—dead in a hovel—the man that sold O'Neill Crowley twenty long years before.

It is but fair to state that Coffey's relatives cannot in the slightest degree be held culpable for his miserable misdoings. At the very time when he turned traitor he was on bad terms with his relations, and remained so until his tragic end. He was estranged even from his own people, whom he tried to wrong, and whose children live to-day, not alone absolutely free from any discredit, but highly and justly respected in the locality where they live.

## CHAPTER XI.

When Mary Hanley closed the door behind O'Neill Crowley she darkened the window and again bade him welcome. We have met her; she is married now and is Mary Donovan. The events of that night and following morning are graven upon her memory. She herself told us the story as she sat beside her own fireside, her husband and daughter listening to the tale. Let us give it as she spoke it, with all the gentle pity of a woman who had sorrowed for a brave man's death.

" 'The police would never know ye,' says I, as I looked at him sharp; 'but I'd know ye anywhere, no matter how ye'd be dressed.'

" 'For he had changed his clothes from the time I saw him last and was got up like a laborin' man. When he slept in the barn last—for they were about the neighborhood for two or three weeks—he was dressed in a pilot cloth jacket and in his own good clothes.

" 'He sat down a' wan side of the fire, and they brought him a basin of water to bathe his feet. He told me he was after comin' all the way from Cork and that he was tired and weary.

" 'I asked him how was the risin', and he says, 'After to-day I think God is wid us, for we were in the same field wid the soldiers and they never found us.' Then he says how he expected hundreds to meet them in the wood next day. He was jaded and worn, and as he drew the bench alongside the fire I noticed how his cheeks were sunk and his eyes were hollow since he was wid us last. For he often slept in our barn before, and often as many as twelve were there for the night. Sure they were always welcome, an' me poor brother himself had a great heart in the risin', and used to be goin' about wid 'em all from place to place.

" 'Crowley had a gun and a pistol wid him that night, but sure they always had their arms. He said McClure and Kelly would call for him early in the mornin', and that he would sleep in the ould place as afore. We were talkin' quiet and aisy when he pulls out a flag from his breast. It was green



silk, and a harp and some writin' on it; but sorra' a bit of me remembers what it said, for 'tis a long time ago now.

"That night he said the Rosary wid us, and no better man ever gave it out than poor Crowley. He was always civil spoken, an' I never heard a quate word pass his lips. He was a good Christian, an' a fine man. But when they'd be drillin' in the barn of an evenin', an' when McClure would be givin' out the orders, you'd see his heart grow up within him, and he'd look as big again. McClure was a wee bit of a crayture alongside him, but he had great fire in him, and could be terribly cross when he was roused. He often sat at the fire of a night talkin' to Crowley, an' I used to watch his dark, hard face and bright eyes, and used to notice what purty little feet he had.

"I didn't like to be too near, fearin' they'd think I'd be curious like, an', anyhow, I was in terror always that they'd be tried for their lives some day or another, an' that they'd put me on the green cloth. I couldn't swear the hard word agin wan of them, an' 'twould come bitter to take a wrong oath, so 'twas best, says I to myself, not to know anything at all. But like to that, sure I got to know everything.

"Well, after prayers he went to the barn with a kind 'Good-night' an' 'God save ye'."

Even as he spoke it the flying column from Waterford, under the command of Mr. Redmond, R. M., had arrived in Mitchelstown, but six miles away, and were quartered in the barracks. There were now nearly 500 troops of all arms ready to make the fell swoop.

## CHAPTER XII.

Crowley had himself lain down and slept soundly. Twelve, one, two o'clock, and he hardly changed his position. Will nothing wake him? Wake up, man! Can you not hear the bugle calls in the barrack square, the hoarse cry of commands, the clank of 300 rifles as they are brought to ground, the champing of bits, and the clank of the swords in scabbards? They number off, these companies of Her Majesty's Sixth Regiment of foot—the troops of cavalry, the engineer corps, and the police force, forbidding shadows ranging in long lines across the barrack yard in the dark morning, and the lanterns glimmer and pass along the ranks as the officers inspect the arms. Then a few hurried orders, the lines take a different formation, the shadows move and swerve and file out through the gates. The lights are extinguished, the gates are closed, and the double sentinels on the walls watch the moving, swaying mass melt into the darkness. First rode the advance guard, with mounted Constable Johnson as guide. Then followed the main body of cavalry, with Mounted Constable Merryman as their guide. Then came the infantry, under the command of Major Moss, whilst the police brought up the rear. In all, over 300 men, well armed and resolute. The police had their great coats on and had tucked white handkerchiefs under their left shoulder straps to serve as a means of identification should the columns be attacked *en route*. For it must be remembered that the authorities expected they would have to face many hundreds of men in fierce revolt against the Crown. The men in the Sixth had their military overcoats strapped across their shoulders, and had the full supply of cartridges served out for their Snider rifles.

Strict silence was ordained; naught was heard but the steady tramp, the occasional neigh of a horse or the ring of steel bridled chains. On by the Kildorrery road, skirting the Kingston demesne, turning to the right at Garen's Cross, then on to Corrogurm road, which breaks out opposite Kileooney Wood. On and on, the steady, heavy tread of 300 men marching through the black night.

Crowley sleeps on, never knowing his danger. His head

is thrown back upon his arm, just as a child rests, dreaming, perhaps, of that grave far away in Ballymacoda where sleeps his rebel father and his outlawed uncle, the priest who was flayed in '98. Or, mayhap, gentler visions—of a pair of tender eyes that looked down into his in the years gone by, of a voice that sung his lullaby when he was a wee, helpless thing; of the vanished hand that lightly stroked his bright brown hair.

What is that? The signal! In a moment he springs to his feet, wide awake, listening. 'Tis repeated. He seizes his Enfield rifle that lay by his side and looks out. McClure and Kelly are there. A hurried word or two, and he passes out—out into the night and darkness—out to his death.



Composed from the Book of Kells

## CHAPTER XIII.

Shortly after four o'clock Crowley, M'Clure, and Kelly entered the wood and a few moments later the troops deployed on to the main road on the other side of the stream. The cavalry swept across the wooden bridge which then spanned the Ahaphooka, rode at a gallop up the rising ground, lined the road which winds along the head of the wood, and formed a junction with the numerous police force which, coming on cars from Kildorrery, had arrived almost simultaneously. Oh, their arrangements were perfectly planned. Then, following fast, came half a company of the 6th, who surrounded the farm houses. The main body of the infantry swarmed into the fields from the main road, and took up their position on the plateau which commanded the wood from the opposite side of the river. The police force which had marched from Mitchelstown supported their left. The wood was thus, in the space of ten minutes, completely invested. No one man, or small body of men, can leave it now. It was just one hour and three-quarters since the troops had left the barracks behind them. In the darkness lay the grove, silent and forbidding. They knew not how many men were within it, so they waited for the dawn. The little river ran between them, its waters swollen and flecked with foam. There was not a whisper spoken as the soldiers lay down amid the fern and furze and looked to their rifles. No sound save the babble of the river as it sings its way to the sea.

The rebels had barely entered the wood when they heard the uphill rush of the mounted men. They never dreamed that an expedition had set out against them, or that their plans for the next morning had been betrayed. They believed it was only another raid upon the farm houses suspected of sheltering them. So they moved deeper into the wood, down toward the river at the bottom, and waited. They heard the mounted troops halt, and then a challenge and an answer. This was the joining of the Kildorrery force with the cavalry. Cautiously the rebels moved further down, but slanting their steps in an easterly direction. Then once more they paused, and eagerly they listened. Something in front, the snap of a

breech block or the clink of a bayonet made M'Clure clutch Crowley; the soldier's instinct had told him they were surrounded, their retreat cut off. Then welled up the bitterness against their unknown betrayer, then came the stern resolution to render a good account of themselves. They rammed home the bullets, for it was the old muzzle-loading Enfield rifle they carried; and stood motionless as the tall trees themselves. Three hundred against three! It was brave odds!



Composed from the Book of Kells.



## CHAPTER XIV.

The minutes passed and, as the dawn came, cold and grey, eyes were strained towards every opening in the wood. The soldiers peered into the deep shadows, and their fears gave movement and shape to the slender trunks and skeleton branches. Slowly lifted the morning mists, and the gloom in the wood lightened and lightened. Then the pipe of half-awakened birds and the clear note of a lark singing overhead. Bye and bye the steel-grey light is shot with the crimson dawn, and the trees before them stand out sharp and clear. But where—where are the rebels?

The three watched and waited, and, with the morning light, saw here and there amid the furze the gleam of a red coat or the outline of a shako. On the ridge were the prone forms of two companies of the 6th; to the right the solid ranks of the police in their great coats, lined down to the river. A steel girt circle this.

Then a flash, a puff of smoke, and the ping of a rifle bullet. Crowley had fired the first shot. In rapid succession came flashes from the rifles of the other two, and the bullets sang amid the British soldiers. Then the rapid answering discharge of the Sniders of the military. The balls whistled over the insurgents' heads, stripping the bark from the pine trees and sundering the withered branches; then the dull thud as they buried themselves in the tree trunks. The rifle smoke rolled heavily along the ridge of the plateau and hung over the slopes where many of the soldiers lay amid the bushes. The tongues of fire flashed amid the smoke and the valley awoke with the clamor.

And many a peasant looked out from his cabin in wonder, and many a woman arose and crossed herself on that Sabbath morning, and prayed for the mother's sons who were fighting that day for Ireland. And Edward Coffey, in his house by the gates of the Chapel of Shraherla, pressed his white face against the window-pane and heard the echo of his morning's work.

The soldiers who were stationed around the farm houses above the wood now entered the plantation and advanced

cautiously, seeking cover behind the trees as they moved forward, for the well-sustained fire of the outlaws completely deceived them as to the force they were coping with. Steadily they advanced, Mr. Redmond at their head, revolver in hand.

By this time the three had moved still further to the right, loading and firing as they went. This added to the perplexity of the military, who could only direct their fire at the parts of the wood from which the rebel shots proceeded. The smoke from their guns lifted but slowly, and they could not aim with any accuracy. Crowley was in advance of the other two and was in the act of sighting his rifle when a bullet mangled three fingers of the left hand and broke the stock of his piece. He staggered from behind his cover, the gun fell from his grasp, but he drew his revolver, in the act half turning on the soldiery who were now close upon him in the wood, raised his weapon—when, with a hoarse cry, he threw up his hands, staggered forward a couple of paces, and fell to the ground shot through the body. The bullet entered beneath his left arm and passed out through his right side. M'Clure, though bleeding from a severe wound in the thigh, sprang forward to raise him, but seeing that it was all over with his brave companion, was about to dash into the river, wade to the other side and risk a bold rush between the ranks of infantry and police, when Mr. Redmond seized him from behind, and, placing the barrel of his revolver to his head, cried out: "Surrender in the Queen's name, I am a magistrate!"

"And I am a soldier," panted M'Clure, as he leveled his own weapon back over his shoulder; but ere he could fire a policeman struck down his arm with a clubbed rifle and the weapon was dashed from his grasp. Kelly, who had seen the fall of one of his friends and the capture of the other, essayed to escape by creeping along the bank of the river, but soon he found himself confronted by a dozen of the 6th who covered him with their rifles. Resistance would be madness, so he surrendered himself a prisoner of war to Captain Meredith.

M'Clure and Kelly were handcuffed and led away. Poor Crowley lay where he had fallen. The woods were searched, but no trace of another. Then the wonder grew how these three men could have fought as they had fought, keeping so many trained soldiers at bay. Then wonder grew to pity for the man who had fallen, and the soldiers made a rough bier

of their rifles and carried him along the river banks and out of the wood, and laid him upon the sloping ground beneath Hennessy's house. They placed a great coat under his head, and a soldier covered him with another. Then Dr. Segrave, the military surgeon, examined him, and saw he had but a few short hours to live. The wound was a cruel wound, and it brought sure death to O'Neill Crowley that Sunday morning.

"Can I do anything for you?" asked Segrave. Crowley raised his dying eyes and whispered: "I would like to see a priest before I die."

To Ballygibbon they hastily despatched Mounted-constable Merryman, the same as had guided the column from Mitchelstown that morning. He was fortunate enough to meet Father O'Connell, the curate of Kildorrery, as he was proceeding to his church to say early Mass at Shraherla.

Meanwhile, Dr. Segrave, fearing the clergyman might be late in coming, read aloud the prayers for the dying. And Crowley never moved, no moan of pain, no muttered curse on the dire treachery that had brought his death suddenly and swiftly; lying there with his blue eyes half closed, the blood that welled from his side froze as it flowed.

## CHAPTER XV.

Then came Father O'Connell. He knelt on the ground beside Crowley and spoke to him.

"I had two loves," said Crowley, feebly, "my faith and my country, and to-day I die for Ireland."

Tears were in the priest's eyes as he prayed for the dying man and administered the last Sacraments of the Church.

Then the chapel bell was heard tolling for Mass. How often had this man lying there dying heard it in his own little village off there behind the hills, away by the wild Southern coast! He will hear it never again—never again see the blue sky above his own fair countryside; never again hear the sigh of the distant ocean, or the moan of the winds in the ruined watchtowers that stand on his own hillsides.

Then Father O'Connell left him to read the Mass in faltering tones and ask his people to pray for the outlaw that lay upon the frozen ground a-dying.

Then came two little girls, and they stood at Crowley's feet. And the soldiers, as they leaned on their rifle barrels, wondered at their frightened faces and tear-dimmed eyes. Crowley saw them and recognized one, the young girl by whose side he had prayed only the night before—Mary Hanley, the girl who had so often bade him welcome to her father's house, and who now came to say good-bye—an eternal farewell. Then Crowley spoke. "Kiss me and pray for me," he said to her companion. "Kiss me, child, and pray for me," he then said to her he knew. For he asked the stranger first, fearing to cast suspicion on the little one in whose house he had often been. And they bent over him and kissed the forehead now wet with the damp of death.

"I got up in the mornin' when I heard the firn' in the wood," said Mary Hanley to us twenty-seven years after that day, "and when they told me one of the Fenians was shot, sure I said, 'tis Crowley, 'tis Crowley for certain, for he was the best prepared to go, and God was always good to the poor Fenians. I promised to pray for him then, an' God knows I did many a day since; but 'tis hard to think how I was so frightened wid the sogers an' forgot to ask him to

pray for me; for, God be praised, I know he has long ago passed the gates."

Neill Brown requested John Hennessy, who was arrested the moment he came forth to ascertain the cause of the firing, to prepare a room in his house for the dying man. Hennessy asserts to the present day that he was getting a bedroom ready when four policemen placed O'Neill Crowley upon a door and bore him through the yard past his house. The magistrate said he had altered his intention and had decided to bring the dying man—to Coffey's! Slowly down the road on to the crossroads, where it was found Dr. Rogers, the medical officer to the Kildorrery Dispensary, had arrived in his gig. Then it was finally arranged to convey Crowley straight to Mitchelstown, and the same constable, Merryman, was sent forward to prepare a bed in the bridewell. As Crowley was lifted into the doctor's trap a young officer standing by offered him his flask and begged him to drink. A smile for the moment hovered over the drawn face of the dying outlaw, and he faltered—"I thank you, but you have given me all I want to-day." His head fell back with a moan as the car started, and when on the road to Mitchelstown Dr. Rogers found he was returning with the dead.

When they bared the dead man in the Bridewell they found suspended from his neck a silver medal of the Immaculate Conception. It was strangely bent, and when they threw his clothes across a rail a flattened bullet fell to the floor. It had struck him full in the breast, but the tiny medallion worn in honor of the Mother of Sorrows had stayed a messenger of death.



## CHAPTER XVI.

The officers commanding the troops drew up an official account of the affair on that same evening, and Major Phillip Moss deposed that the stand made by those three betrayed rebels was a gallant and a stubborn one. During the combat he believed that forty men, at least, were in the wood, the fire was so well sustained. "If," said he, "every man who took up arms against the Crown was as bold as O'Neill Crowley there would be gaps in the muster roll of many a British regiment to-day." So said these soldiers who, whatever they were or whatever they be, can recognize the daring and the worth of a brave foe-man.

Kelly was a native of Kinsale, and in appearance was short in stature, light and active, a man of exceedingly gentle nature and good manners. He was a printer by trade, and had been to Canada, where he worked at his business, returning to the Old Land when duty called him. Together with McClure he stood his trial for high treason, both were sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. The American Government was firm in its demand for McClure's release. He was a citizen of their nation, and they would not submit to his execution. He was given up and lives to-day in this glorious American country, "The land of the free and the home of the brave." Kelly's sentence was commuted, and he was released after some years of harsh imprisonment.

The body of O'Neill Crowley was removed to the Workhouse, there to await an inquest. His sister came from Ballymacoda, and not recognizing the clothes they showed her as her dead brother's, the police endeavored to retain them. Seeing that they might prove the means of implicating some people who had assisted her brother, she firmly insisted, and they were finally handed over to her. So was the silver medal that had stopped the bullet. At the inquest it was claimed by a gipsy, who was a private in the 6th that it was he who had "brought down the rebel," but the "honor" was disputed by Sergeant Tillbrook of the same regiment, who declared that it was he who had fired the fatal shot.

The immense crowds that waited outside the Workhouse

after the inquest had concluded grew impatient, and they broke down the gates and brought the coffin forth and placed it in the hearse.

And from Mitchelstown to Fermoy, and from Fermoy to Ballymacoon, nigh thirty miles, the funeral procession wended its way. Crowds of silent men and weeping women joined it at every crossroad; and they brought white flowers and laid them upon the coffin. Such a strange, weird sight, this body of Irishmen and Irishwomen, marching on and on, gathering as they went, until, as the shades of night were falling, they laid him down to rest beside the man after whom he was named—the priest who was scourged in '98.

And then the earth rattled on his coffin, and many a sob was heard, and many a strong man wept.

Earth to earth. Ashes to ashes. The old, old story.

A last prayer, and the vast crowd melts away, leaving there, sleeping his last sleep in the cold earth, one who had loved so fondly and given his life—FOR IRELAND.



Composed from the Book of Kells.







*Charles Stewart Parnell*

Ireland's Uncrowned King.



SECTION VI.

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IRELAND'S  
GREAT CONSTITUTIONAL  
BATTLE FOR LEGISLATIVE  
INDEPENDENCE

BY

T. P. O'CONNOR, M. P.

CONTAINING

HISTORY OF THE PARNELL MOVEMENT—INTRODUCTION  
OF THE FIRST HOME RULE BILL—CHARACTER  
SKETCHES OF PARNELL, DAVITT, DILLON,  
O'BRIEN, SEXTON, AND OTHERS—  
THE UNITED IRISH LEAGUE



# IRELAND'S GREAT CONSTITUTIONAL BATTLE FOR LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENCE.

BY T. P. O'CONNOR, M. P.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE STRUGGLE FOR HOME RULE.

On November 23, 1867, Allen, Larkin and O'Brien were executed in front of Salford gaol. A short time afterwards their bodies were buried in quicklime, in unconsecrated ground, within the precincts of the prison.

It is impossible, even after the considerable interval that has elapsed, to forget the impression which this event produced upon the Irish people. In most of the towns in Ireland vast multitudes walked in funeral processions through the streets to testify the terrible depths of their grief. A few days after the execution, Mr. T. D. Sullivan wrote the poem with the refrain uttered from the dock, "God Save Ireland!" and wherever in any part of the globe there is now an assembly of Irishmen, social or political—a concert in Dublin, a convention at Chicago, or a Parliamentary dinner in London—the proceedings regularly close with the singing of "God Save Ireland."

To one Irishman, then a youth, living in the country-house of his fathers, and deeply immersed in the small concerns of a squire's daily life, the execution of the Manchester martyrs was a new birth of political convictions. To him, brooding from his early days over the history of his country, this catastrophe came to crystallize impressions into convictions, and to pave the way from dreams to action. It was the execution of Allen, Larkin and O'Brien that gave Mr. Parnell to the service of Ireland.

An indirect effect of all these startling occurrences was to force the attention of the English people and their Parlia-

ment upon the Irish Question. In other words, the evils that had been allowed to eat out the vitals of Ireland for so long a period amid apathy tempered by scoffs, began to attract attention when Irishmen abandoned the paths of constitutional and tranquil agitation, and sought remedy in conspiracy and force. By several circumstances the Irish Church was pushed to the front, the Irish Members began to actively discuss it in Parliament, and finally, as everybody knows, after a fierce struggle and a General Election, the Church was disendowed and disestablished.

This great reform turned attention once more to Parliamentary methods; the spirit of apathy, which had given the fruits of electoral contests without care or regret to the first adventurer, was broken, and people began to think again that it was of some importance whether an honest man or a rogue should be sent to Westminster to represent Ireland. The awakening of Ireland from the long slumber since 1845 had begun, and the awakening of Ireland means the revival of an agitation for self-government. Another movement was destined to add a new and even more potent force to the growing cause of Home Rule. Though the Church Question had been pushed to the front, the Land Question still retained its place as the supreme issue to the majority of the population. Throughout the country mass meetings were held, and the demand of the farmers was put forward with thunderous emphasis. The demand was for the "Three F's"—fixity of tenure, free sale and fair rent; and the farmers had heard this demand advocated so often, had shouted themselves hoarse by so many hillsides in uttering it, had been so stimulated and encouraged by the sight of their battalions in regular array, Sunday after Sunday, and in county after county, that by the time Parliament met they regarded the "Three F's" as having already passed from the region of popular platforms to that of Parliamentary debates and of statute law.

The introduction of Mr. Gladstone's Bill was the mournful awakening that came to all these splendid dreams, for the measure of the Prime Minister stopped far short indeed of the Three F's. The sentimental forces which had been gathering in such might in favor of self-government were now materially increased by the accession of the mighty battalions of the disillusioned and disappointed farmers of the country.

But the foundation of the Home Rule movement, curiously enough, was laid, not in obedience to the impulse of the masses of the people, but in the rancour of a small and a defeated minority of the population. The Disestablishment of the Church had brought back a certain proportion of the Protestant population to that spirit of nationality which had found its most eloquent advocates in the exclusively Protestant Parliament of the ante-Union days. A certain number of very moderate gentlemen of the Catholic faith saw in a movement which Protestant Conservatives were able to support, elements which need not alarm the most milk-and-water adherents to the Doctrine of Nationality. There were more stable elements in constitutional agitators who had fought doggedly on for a Native Parliament through the long eclipse of national faith between 1855 and that hour, like Mr. A. M. Sullivan; and in some men—such as Mr. O'Kelly, M. P. for Roscommon—who, appearing under disguised names, sought after the breakdown of their efforts to free Ireland by force, whether there was any chance of success through Parliamentary action. The latter element took up this attitude at that period with a certain amount of trepidation and at some personal risk; for the distrust of constitutional agitation and the hatred of constitutional agitators still survived among the relics of Fenianism, and the new movement was looked upon by them with the same latent and perilous distrust as all its predecessors. The meeting was held on May 19, 1870, in the Bilton Hotel, Sackville Street, Dublin.

At this meeting were present Conservatives as well known as Mr. Purdon, then Conservative Lord Mayor of Dublin; Mr. Kinahan, who had been High Sheriff, and Major Knox, proprietor of the *Irish Times*, a Conservative organ; nor should the name be omitted of a gentleman who was for a considerable time to play a prominent part in the new movement—Colonel, then Captain, Edward R. King-Harman. Mr. Butt was the chief speaker, and on his proposition, and without a dissentient voice the resolution was passed.

“That it is the opinion of this meeting that the true remedy for the evils of Ireland is the establishment of an Irish Parliament with full control over our domestic affairs.”

A new organization was founded under the name of the “Home Government Association of Ireland.” Before long the movement spread with the rapidity which always comes



to movements founded on indestructible aspirations. Now, just as in 1843, the people had only to see a movement in favor of self-government to flock enthusiastically to its ranks. Then the Prime Minister had passed another measure which transcended in importance any other of the Great Acts which made his first Premiership so momentous an epoch in the resurrection of Ireland. This was the Ballot Act. For the first time in his history the Irish tenant could vote without the fear of eviction, with the attendant risks of hunger, exile or death. The Ballot Act was an act of emancipation to the Irish tenant in a sense far more real than the Emancipation Act of 1829. From the passage of that history, the real voice of Ireland had some opportunity of making itself heard. The new force advanced against all opponents, and every constituency that had its choice declared with unfaltering fidelity in favor of the National candidate.

In four bye-elections the Home Rule candidates triumphed over every obstacle. The struggle between Whiggery and Home Rule was now over. Ireland had definitely declared for the new movement. This will be the place to tell the end of Judge Keogh. In the year 1878 the sensational rumor reached Dublin that he had developed symptoms of insanity in Belgium, whither he had been removed for the benefit of his health, and that he had attempted to kill his attendant and himself. The rumor proved correct. From this period forth he seems never to have recovered full possession of his senses, and gradually sank. He was removed to Bingen, and there died on September 30, 1878. An Englishman with characteristic appreciation of Irish character, is said to have placed a stone over his remains with the inscription, "*Justum et tenacem propositi virum.*" The country which he had betrayed and ruined, on the other hand, congratulated itself in not having received his remains. Indeed, some desperate spirits had resolved that the remains should never rest in hallowed Irish ground; a plot was complete for seizing the body during the funeral and throwing it into the Liffey.

## CHAPTER II.

### ISAAC BUTT, FIRST LEADER OF THE HOME RULE MOVEMENT.

Isaac Butt, the leader of the new movement, was the son of a Protestant clergyman of the North of Ireland. The place of his birth was near the Gap of Barnesmore, a line of hills which is rarely if ever without shadow—not unlike Butt's own life. It was one of his theories that people born amid mountain scenery are more imaginative than the children of the plains. His own nature was certainly imaginative in the highest degree, with the breadth and height of imaginative men, and also with the doubtings, despondency and the dread of the Unseen.

For many years he stood firmly by the principles of Orange Toryism, and he had the career which then belonged to every young Irish Protestant of ability. He went to Trinity College, which at the time presented large prizes, and presented them to those only who had the good luck to belong to the favored faith. Butt's advancement was rapid. He was not many years a student when he was raised to a Professorship of Political Economy. When he went to the Bar his success came with the same ease and rapidity. He was but thirty-one years of age and had been only six years at the Bar when he was made a Queen's Counsel. In politics, however, he had made his chief distinction. It will be remembered that when O'Connell sought to obtain a declaration in favor of Repeal of the Union from the newly emancipated Corporation of Dublin, Butt was selected by his co-religionists, young as he was, to meet the Great Liberator, and his speech was as good as could be made on the side of the maintenance of the Union; and many a year after, when he had become the leader of a Home Rule Party, was quoted against him by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, the Irish Chief Secretary of the period.

Of great though irregular industry, deeply devoted to study, with a mind of large grasp and a singular retentive memory, he was intimately acquainted with all the secrets of his profession; and throughout his life was acknowledged to be a fine lawyer. He represented in Parliament both Youghal in his native county and Harwich in England. His en-

trance into Parliament aggravated many of his weaknesses. It separated him from his profession in Dublin, and thereby increased his already great pecuniary difficulties. His character in many respects was singularly feeble. Some of his weaknesses leaned to virtue's side, and many of the stories told of him suggest a resemblance to the character of Alexander Dumas pere. He borrowed largely and lent largely, and often in the midst of his sorest straits lavished on others the money which he required himself and which often did not belong to him. Throughout his life he was, as a consequence, pursued by the bloodhound of vast and insurmountable debt. At least once he was for several months in a debtors' prison, and there used to be terrible stories—even in the days when he was an English member of Parliament—of unpaid cabmen and appearances at the police courts.

But he was a man of supreme political genius; one of those whose right to intellectual eminence is never questioned, but willingly conceded without effort on his side, without opposition on the part of others. The irregularities of his life shut him out from official employment, and he saw a long series of inferiors reach to position and wealth while he remained poor and neglected. There is a considerable period of his life which is almost total eclipse. There came an Indian Summer when he returned to the practice of his profession in Ireland, and once more joined in the political struggles of his countrymen. Mr. Gladstone's Dissolution of 1874 came upon Butt with the same bewildering surprise as upon so many other people. That election found him in a cruel difficulty. On the one hand, the country was beyond all question with him; he knew that he could count on the masses to vote in favor of self-government as securely as every other popular leader who has ever been able to make the appeal. The majority of the constituencies were ready, he knew, to return Home Rule candidates; and thus the general election afforded him the opportunity of creating a greater Home Rule party, but, on the other hand, elections cannot be fought without money; elections were dearer then even than they are now, and Butt wanted to fight, not a seat here and there, but a whole national campaign, for three-fourths of the constituencies could be won by a Home Rule candidate if a Home Rule candidate could be brought forward. For so immense a work he had nothing to fall back on but a few hundred pounds in the funds

of the Home Rule Association, and he himself was at one of his recurrent periods of desperate need. He was arrested for debt on the very morning of the day, when, learning of the dissolution, he was making his plan of campaign, though the matter was arranged in some way or other, he had to fly to England, and this prevented him from exercising that personal supervision over the General Election which is absolutely required from the leader of a movement. Butt could only adopt, under the circumstances, a policy of compromise, and make the best out of bad, but inevitable material. Where there was a real and genuine Home Rule candidate ready to come forward, and able to bear the expenses of an election contest, Butt fought the seat. In this way he was able to bring into public life many earnest men who had for years found it impossible to take any Parliamentary part in rescuing the country. His party contained A. M. Sullivan, Mr. Bigger, Mr. Richard Power, Mr. Sheil and several others, who were really devoted to the National cause. On the other hand he had to accept, in constituencies, where he had not the men or the money to fight, the "Deathbed repentance," as it was called, of men who had grown gray in the service of one or other of the English parties. These time-worn Whigs or Tories—such as Sir Patrick O'Brien and Sir George Bowyer—of course swallowed the Home Rule pledge. Some of the new men were little better. The race of Rabagas had been scotched but not killed, and among Butt's recruits was a certain proportion of lawyers, who were as ready as any of their predecessors to sell themselves and their principles to the highest bidder. Many of them have since received office; all of the tribe have expected and asked it. It was, then, a very mixed party Butt had gathered around him—a party of patriots and of place hunters, of men young, earnest and fresh for struggle, and of men physically exhausted and morally dead—a party of life-long Nationalists and of veteran lacqueys. There was a tragic contrast between such a party and the renewed and sublime and noble hopes of the nation. Of the 103 Irish members, sixty were returned pledged to vote for the entire rearrangement of the legislative relations between the two countries.



## CHAPTER III.

### UNSUITABILITY OF BUTT AS LEADER.

Such was the party; and now how was it with the leader? His weakness with regard to pecuniary matters has been already touched upon; he had, besides, all the other foibles, as well as the charms, of an easy-going, good-natured, pliant temperament. Though his faults were grossly exaggerated—for instance, many intimates declare that they never saw him, even during the acquaintance of years, once under the influence of drink—he had, unquestionably, made many sacrifices on the altars of the gods of indulgence. It may be that, with him, as with so many others, the pursuit of pleasure was but the misnomer for the flight from despair. He was all his life troubled by an unusually slow circulation, and it may be that the central note of his character was melancholy. In his early days he was a constant contributor to the *Dublin University Magazine* and his tales have a vein of the morbid melancholy that runs through the youthful letters of Alfred de Musset. Allusion has been already made to his imaginativeness; this imaginativeness did much to weaken his resolve. Curious stories are told of the superstitions that ran through his nature. Though a Protestant, he used to carry some of the religious symbols—medals, for instance—which Catholics use, and he would not go into a law court without his medals. There are still more ludicrous stories of his standing appalled or delighted before such accidents as putting on his clothes the wrong way, and other trivialities. Then, the demon of debt, which had haunted him all his life, now stood menacing him behind. He had just re-established himself in a considerable practice when he again entered Parliament, and membership of Parliament is entirely incompatible with the retention of his entire practice by an Irish barrister. He was, throughout his leadership, divided between a dread dilemma; either he had to neglect Parliament, and then his party was endangered, or neglect his practice, and then bring ruin on himself or a family unprovided for, deeply loving and deeply loved. There is no Nemesis so relentless as that which dogs pecuniary recklessness; the spendthrift is also the drudge; and in his



days of old age, weakness and terrible political responsibilities, Butt had to fly between London and Dublin, to stop up o' nights, alternately reading briefs and drafting Acts of Parliament, to make his worn and unwieldy frame do the double work, which would try the nerves and strength of a giant with the limber joints and freshness of early youth. At this period Butt's frame was worn, though to outward appearances he was still vigorous. The hand of incurable disease already held him tight and the dark death, of which he had so great a horror, was not many years off; finally, in 1874, he was sixty-one years of age. On the other hand, he had great qualities of leadership. He was unquestionably a head and shoulders above all his followers, able though so many of them were, and was, next to Mr. Gladstone, the greatest Parliamentarian of his day. Then he had the large toleration and the easy temper that make leadership a light burden to followers; and the burden of leadership must be light when—as in an Irish party—the leader has no offices or salaries to bestow. And, above all, he had the modesty and the simplicity of real greatness. Every man had his ear, every man his kindly word and smile, and some his strong affection. Thus it was that Butt was to many the most lovable of men; and more than one political opponent, impelled by principle to regard him as the most serious danger to the Irish cause, struck him hard, but wept as he dealt the blow.

This sketch of the character of Butt will show the points in which he was unsuitable for the work before him. He was the leader of a small party in an assembly to which it was hateful in opinion and feeling and temperament. A party in such circumstances can only make its way by audacious aggressiveness, dogged resistance, relentless purpose; and for such Parliamentary forlorn hopes the least suited of leaders was a man whom a single groan of impatience could hurt, and one word of compliment delight.

The history of Butt's attempts to obtain land or any other reform in Ireland from the Imperial Parliament was the same as that of so many of his predecessors. Year after year, session after session, there was the same tale of Irish demand mocked at, denounced with equal vigor by the leaders of both the English parties alike, and then rejected in the division lobbies by overwhelming English majorities.

Butt was very much pained and disappointed by this uni-

versal rejection of all his proposals, and began to have gloomy forebodings as to the success of his policy. Intimately acquainted as Butt was with the working of the Land Act of 1870, he probably knew very well that a crisis was inevitable—such as came upon Ireland in 1879. And possibly, in one of those moments of gloom and depression with which he was too familiar, he may have anticipated an hour when there would come the same tragic and terrible close to his agitation which had wound up the career of O'Connell—a country not free and prosperous, but once more tight in the grip of hunger, and more helpless than ever against oppression. To preach patience to a people under such conditions was to mock a starving man with honeyed words.

There was, however, another and a graver danger to the success of Butt's movement. Butt knew well that as time went on he was bound to lose a certain proportion of such a party. When there is on the one side a certain number of men willing to sell themselves, and on the other a Government with vast resources and occasional need for the services of a corrupt Irishman, the moment when the two will come to a bargain is a matter of mutual arrangement. The Home Rule Party had not been many years in existence when two or three of its members had accepted place, and there was not the least doubt that others were willing. Then, apart from the want of pence, which was driving several of Butt's followers into office-seeking, the party was suffering from that hope deferred which depresses and then disintegrates political bodies. Session passed after session, motion after motion, bill after bill, and still no advance was made. Then the party, drawn from elements so heterogeneous as Colonel King-Harman and Mr. Gray, Sir Patrick O'Brien and Mr. Richard Power, could not be held in any strict bonds of discipline. Butt was exceedingly anxious to get the party to act together as a party on the great questions which divided the two English parties; all his efforts in this direction failed. In the Parliament of 1874, it gave Sir Stafford Northcote very little concern if Colonel King-Harman voted in favor of Home Rule, after the annual and academic discussion, when the Irish were put down by a combination of all the English parties in the House, for in all English party divisions he was secure of Colonel King-Harman's vote, as though he had not corrupted the general purity of his Conservatism by the

heresy of Home Rule. And, similarly, even Lord Hartington might excuse the occasional error of an expectant Whig like Mr. Meldon, when Mr. Meldon's vote against the Tories was as certain as his desire for a place.

Butt fully grasped this truth of Parliamentary tactics, but, of course, was unable to get men to act as an Irish party who were bound by corrupt hopes or party predilections to give their first allegiance to an English party and an English leader. Thus his whole policy was founded on sand. All these various causes, working together, had produced in the Irish party of 1874 disorganization, depression, the breakdown of the barriers of shame among the corrupt, the sealing up of the fountains of hope among the pure. The period of dry-rot had set in.

In the light of subsequent events, it is now easy to see the dread abyss to which the Home Rule Party was once more bringing Ireland. The accession of a Liberal Ministry would have immediately completed the disaster which the defeat of Butt's proposals had begun. At least half the party would at once have become applicants for office, and probably a considerable number would have realized their wishes. The remainder would gradually have sunk deeper and deeper into a position of obedience to the English whips, and Irish national interests would once more have been made absolutely subservient to the interests of a single English party, to the convenience of Ministers, and to the opportunities of an overworked, listless and generally hostile House of Commons. The first result of this state of things would have been to break down once more all faith in Parliamentary agitation. A portion of the people would have found some hope for the redress of intolerable grievances in another resort to revolutionary methods. The majority, following the precedent of the period immediately subsequent to Keogh's betrayal, would in the cynicism begotten of blighted hope, once more have chosen bad or good men, honest patriots or self-seeking knaves, in the spirit of chance and of caprice. This downfall of constitutional agitation would have been made the more disastrous by events which at this moment were hurrying upon Ireland. The year 1879, as will presently be seen, brought one of those crises which were bound to recur in Ireland as long as its land system remained unreformed. Famine would have followed the distress of 1879, as it followed the blight of 1846. The

country, without an honest and energetic Parliamentary representation, would have been left at the mercy of the ignorance, and the flippant levity of English Ministers, and Ireland, once more on the threshold of a successful movement, would have been dragged back for another generation into the slough of hunger, eviction, dishonest representatives, and futile insurrection.

The men and the methods that warded off this catastrophe were chosen with the ironical capriciousness of destiny. The one was a man already advanced in years, without the smallest trace of oratorical ability, without culture, with no political experience wider than that to be acquired on a water board or a town council. The other, at this time at least, was a young and obscure country gentleman, who had given no pledges to the political future save those of a very unsuccessful election contest, and two or three stumbling and very ineffective attempts at public speech.

On the night of April 22, 1875, the House of Commons was engaged in the not unaccustomed task of passing a Coercion Bill for Ireland. Mr. Butt, for some reason or other, thought it desirable that the progress of the measure on this evening should be slow, and he asked a member of his party, who was still young to the House, to speak against time. "How long?" asked the member of his leader, "would you wish me to speak?" "A pretty good while," was Mr. Butt's reply. Mr. Biggar, who was the member appealed to, gave an interpretation of this *mot d'ordre* far larger than probably Mr. Butt had ever imagined or intended. It was five o'clock when Mr. Biggar rose, it was five minutes to nine when he sat down.

Let us quote Hansard for a description of the scene; its unconscious humor and significance will be interesting:

The honorable member proceed to read extracts from the evidence before the Westmeath Committee—as was understood—but in a manner which rendered him totally unintelligible. At length—

"The Speaker, interrupting, reminded the honorable gentleman that the rules required that an honorable member, when speaking, should address himself to the Chair. This rule the honorable gentleman was at present neglecting.

"Mr. Biggar said that his non-observance of the rule was partly because he found it difficult to make his voice heard after speaking for so long a time, and partly because his posi-



tion in the House made it very inconvenient for him to read his extracts directly towards the Chair; he would, however, with permission, take a more favorable position.

"The honorable member accordingly, who had been speaking from below the gangway, removed to a bench nearer to the Speaker's chair, taking with him a large mass of papers, from which he continued to read long extracts, with comments.

"At length the honorable member said he was unwilling to detain the House at further length, and would conclude by stating his conviction that he had proved to every impartial mind that the Government had made out no case for the maintenance of this monstrous system of coercion, and that their proposal was perfectly unreasonable. The honorable gentleman, who had been speaking nearly four hours, then moved his amendment!"



Sculpture on Window: Cathedral Church, Glendalough: Beranger, 1779.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers."



## CHAPTER IV.

### JOE BIGGAR AND HIS "ACTIVE" POLICY.

Neither Mr. Butt, nor the House of Commons, nor Mr. Biggar himself could possibly have foreseen the momentous place which this night's work was destined to hold in all the subsequent history of the relation between England and Ireland. It was on this night that the policy was born which has since become known to all the world—the policy known as "obstruction" by its enemies and as the "active policy" by its friends.

There were few men of whom friends and enemies formed so different an estimate as Mr. Biggar. The feelings of his friends and intimates was affectionate almost to fanaticism. When there were private and convivial meetings of the Irish Party, the effort was always made to limit the toasts to the irreducible minimum, for talking has naturally ceased to be much of an amusement to men who have to do so much of it in the performance of public duties. There was one toast, however, which was never set down and was always proposed; this toast was the "Health of Mr. Biggar." Then there occurred a scene which was pleasant to look upon. There arose from all the party one long, spontaneous, universal cheer—a cheer straight from every man's heart, the usually frigid speech of Mr. Parnell grew warm and even more tender; everything showed that, whoever stood highest in the respect, Mr. Biggar held first place in the affections of his comrades. To the outside world there was no man who presented a sterner, a more prosaic and harder front than Mr. Biggar. On such occasions the other side of his character stood revealed. His breast heaved, his face flushed, he dashed his hand with nervous haste to his eyes; but the tears had already risen and were rushing down his face.

To his intimates, then, Mr. Biggar was known as a man overflowing with kindness; of an almost absolute unselfishness. A man once bitterly hated Mr. Biggar until he had a conversation with one of Mr. Biggar's sisters, and found that she was unable to speak of all her brother's kindness with an unbroken voice. In the House of Commons, with all his fifty-seven years, he was at the beck and call of men who could be

almost his grandchildren. Mr. Healy is preparing an onslaught on the Treasury Bench; "Joe," he cries to Mr. Biggar, "get me return so-and-so." Mr. Biggar is off to the library. He has scarcely got back when the relentless member for Monaghan requires to add to his armory the division list in which the perfidious Minister has recorded his infamy, and away goes Mr. Biggar to the library again. Then Mr. Sexton, busily engaged in the study of an official report, approaches the member for Cavan with a card and an insinuating smile, and Mr. Biggar sets forth on an expedition to see some of the importunate visitants by whom members of Parliament are dogged. As a quarter to six is approaching on a Wednesday evening, and Mr. Parnell thinks it just as well that the work of the Government should not go too fast, he calls on Mr. Biggar and Mr. Biggar is on his legs, filling in the horrid interval—Heaven knows how. The desolate stranger, who knows no member of Parliament, and yearns to see the House of Commons at work, thinks fondly of Mr. Biggar, and obtains a ticket of admission. He is seen almost every night surrounded by successive be vies of ladies—young and old, native and foreign—whom he is escorting to the Ladies' Gallery. Nobody asks any favor of Mr. Biggar without getting it. The man who to the outside public appears the most odious type of Irish fractiousness is adored by the policemen, worshipped by the attendants of the House; and there is good ground for the suspicion that there was a secret treaty between him and the late Sergeant-at-Arms, the genial and universally popular Captain Gossett, founded on their common desire to bring sittings to the abrupt and inglorious end of a "count out."

But this is only one side of his character. His hate was as fierce and unquestioning as his love, and he hated all his political opponents. He had the true Ulster nature; uncompromising, downright, self-controlled, narrow. The subtleties by which men of wider minds, more complex natures, less stable purpose and conviction, were apt to palliate their changes were entirely incomprehensible to Mr. Biggar, and the self-justifications of moral weakness aroused only his scorn. His purpose, too, when once resolved upon, was inflexible. It was this inflexibility of purpose that made him so great a political force. Finally, he was as fearless as he was single-minded. The worst tempest in the House of Commons, the

sternest decree that English law could enforce against an Irish patriot, and equally the disapproval of his own people, were incapable of causing him a moment of trepidation. He said many terrible things in the House of Commons; he never retracted one syllable of anything he ever said. There is a scene in "Pere Goriot," in which the pangs of the dying and deserted father are depicted with terrible force. He is speaking of his daughters and of their husbands, of the one he speaks with the tenderness of a woman's heart; of the other, with the ferocity of an enraged tiger. The passage suggests the two sides of Mr. Biggar's nature; in the depth of his love, in the fierceness of his hate, he is the "Pere Goriot" of Irish politics.

A great difficulty meets the biographer of Mr. Biggar at the outset. He was not uncommunicative about himself, but he did not understand himself, and he much underrated himself. Asked by a friend to write his autobiography, his answer was: "I am a very commonplace character." In his early days when he used to be asked to make a speech, he cheerfully started out on the attempt, having made the preliminary statement, "I can't speak a d—d bit." He was born in Belfast on August 1, 1828, and was educated at the Belfast Academy, where he remained from 1832 to 1844. The record of his school days is far from satisfactory. He was very indolent—at least he says so himself—he showed no great love for reading—in this regard the boy, indeed, was father to the man—he was poor at composition, and of course abjectly hopeless at elocution. The one talent he did exhibit was a talent for figures. It was perhaps this want of any particular success in learning, as well as delicacy of health, which made Mr. Biggar's parents conclude that he had better be removed from school and placed in business. He was taken into his father's office, who—as is known—was engaged in the provision trade, and he continued as assistant until 1861, when he became head of the firm. This part of his career may be here dismissed with the remark that he retired from trade in 1880, and remained out of business during the remainder of his life, giving his attention exclusively to the Irish movement.

Mr. Biggar always took an interest in politics, and it will not surprise those acquainted with his subsequent career to know that he was always on the side which was in a hopeless

minority, and which opposed the reigning clique and the established regime. For instance, when the late Mr. McMechan sought on one occasion the representation of Belfast he had only fourteen supporters in all, and Mr. Biggar was one of the fourteen. In 1868, Mr. Biggar had a share in creating the curious combination by which Mr. William Johnston, of Ballykilbeg, was elected by Orange Democrats and Catholic Nationalists.

In 1870 Mr. Biggar made an attempt to get into the Town Council, standing for his native ward, which had always been regarded as a Tory stronghold. He was well beaten. Mr. Biggar received his defeat with the declaration that he would fight the ward on every occasion until he became its member. In the following year he again stood, with the result that he was returned at the head of the poll. He had previous to this obtained a seat on the Water Board, and he was chairman of that body from August, 1869, to March, 1872. Some stormy scenes occurred during Mr. Biggar's tenure of office; for the future member for Cavan gave his colleagues some specimens of that absolutely irreverent freedom of speech which has since alternately shocked and amused a higher assembly. There was a meeting in county Antrim for the purpose of expressing sympathy with the Queen on the recovery of the Prince of Wales; and whether it was because of his disbelief in princes generally, or because he was disgusted with the fulsomeness of some of the language employed, Mr. Biggar wrote to the newspapers to say that the attendance at the meeting did not exceed fifty. When his year of office closed he was superseded, and was even refused the customary vote of thanks.

Mr. Biggar's first attempt to enter Parliament was made at Londonderry in 1872. He had not the least idea of being successful; but he had at this time mentally formulated the policy which he afterwards carried out with inflexible purpose—he preferred the triumph of an open enemy to that of a half-hearted friend. The candidates were Mr. (now Sir Charles) Lewis, Mr. (now Chief Baron) Palles, and Mr. Biggar. At that moment Mr. Palles, as Attorney General, was prosecuting Mr. Duggan and other Catholic bishops for the part they had taken in a famous Galway election, and Mr. Biggar made it a first and indispensable condition of his withdrawing from the contest that these prosecutions should be dropped. Mr.

Palles refused; Mr. Biggar received only 89 votes, but the Castle official was defeated, and he was satisfied. The bold fight he had made marked out Mr. Biggar as the man to lead one of the assaults which at this time the rising Home Rule Party was beginning to make on the seats of Whig and Tory. When the General Election of 1874 came, it was represented to Mr. Biggar that he would better serve the cause by standing for Cavan. He was nominated, and returned, and member for Cavan he remained for years.



Sculpture on a Capital: Priest's House, Glendalough: Beranger, 1779.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers."



## CHAPTER V.

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL—HISTORY OF THE PARNELL FAMILY.

It was not long after the night of Mr. Biggar's four hours' speech that a young Irish member took his seat for the first time. This was Mr. Parnell, elected for the county of Meath in succession to John Martin—a veteran and incorruptible patriot who had died a few days before the opening of this new chapter in the Irish struggle.

When the dissolution of February, 1874, came, Mr. Parnell wished to stand for Wicklow, but he was then high sheriff of the county, and the Government would not allow him to qualify himself by resigning. Shortly after, Colonel Taylor's acceptance of office as Chancellor of the Duchy in the new Disraeli Administration made a vacancy for the county of Dublin, and it was deemed advisable to fight the seat. The contest was regarded as a forlorn hope, and was known at the same time to be necessarily an expensive one. The offer of Mr. Parnell to fight the seat at his own expense came at a time when there was scarcely a penny in the exchequer of the National Party, and the mere fact alone of his willingness to bear the burden in such a contest was enough to secure him a hearing; but there were many doubts and fears, and the first impression was that if a young landlord, hitherto entirely unknown in the national struggle—for the outer, and still more, the inner history of this shy, reserved young man, buried in his Wicklow estate, was a closed book to everybody in the world—if such a man wished to represent a constituency it was from no higher motive than social ambition; and men who had become members of Parliament for such reasons have left a long record of half-hearted adherence, ending in violent hostility to the national cause. At last it was agreed that the young aspirant should at least get the privilege of a hearing, and he had a personal interview with the Council of the Home Rule League. John Martin and Mr. A. M. Sullivan were favorably impressed; the latter undertook to propose his adoption at a meeting in the Rotunda and here is his account of what followed and of Mr. Parnell's debut in public life.

"The resolution which I had moved in his favor having

been adopted with acclamation, he came forward to address the assemblage. To our dismay he broke utterly. He faltered, he paused, went on, got confused, and pale with intense but subdued nervous anxiety, caused everyone to feel deep sympathy for him. The audience saw it all and cheered him kindly and heartily; but many on the platform shook their heads, sagely prophesying that if ever he got to Westminster, no matter how long he stayed there, he would either be a 'Silent Member' or be known as 'Single-speech Parnell.' "

Nobody was surprised when, as the result of the election, Colonel Taylor was returned by an overwhelming majority. If anything were needed to account for the expected result, and to encourage hope for a better chance next time, it was found in the universal sentiment that the Nationalists had been represented by an extremely poor candidate. Then, as later, Mr. Parnell had none of the qualities which had hitherto been associated with the idea of a successful Irish leader. He became one of the most potent of Parliamentary debaters in the House of Commons, through his power of saying exactly what he meant and his thorough grasp of his ideas and wants. But Mr. Parnell had become this in spite of himself. He retained to the very last day an almost invincible repugnance to speaking; if he could through any excuse be silent, he remained silent; and the want of all training before his entrance into political life made him a speaker more than usually stumbling. Then, his manner was cold and reserved; he seemed entirely devoid of enthusiasm, and he spoke with that strong English accent which in Ireland has come to be inevitably associated with the adherents of the English garrison and the enemies of the national cause.

But if the truth were known, Mr. Parnell, upon entering upon political life, was reaching the natural sequel of his own descent, of his early training, of the strongest tendencies of his own nature. It was one of the strongest and most curious peculiarities of Mr. Parnell, not merely that he rarely, if ever, spoke of himself, but that he rarely, if ever, gave any indication of having studied himself. His mind, if one may use the jargon of the Germans, was purely objective. There are few men who, after a certain length of acquaintance, do not familiarize you with the state of their hearts or their stomachs, or their finances; with their fears, their hopes, their aims. But no man was ever a confidant of Mr. Parnell. Any

allusion to himself by another, either in the exuberance of friendship, or the design of flattery, was passed by unheeded; and it was a joke among his intimates that to Mr. Parnell the being Parnell did not exist. But from various casual and unintentional hints the following may be taken as a fair summary of his life and its influences.

The history of his own family was well calculated to make him a strong Nationalist. The family came from Congleton, in Cheshire, and it is from this town that one branch, raised to the peerage, has taken its title. Thomas Parnell, the poet, was one of the race.

The Parliamentary distinction dates, in the Parnell family, from the early part of the last century. John Parnell was member for Maryborough, in the Irish House of Commons, one hundred and fifty years ago. He was the son of a judge of the Queen's Bench. He died in 1782, and he was immediately succeeded by his son John, afterwards Sir John. In 1787, Sir John was made Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the Red List, in which Sir Jonah Barrington sums up his impressions of the Irish politicians of his time, he writes opposite the name of Sir John Parnell the one word "Incorruptible." He proved his claim to the title by giving up the office he had held for seventeen years, and voting steadily against the Union.

Henry Parnell, the son of Sir John, was a member of the Irish House of Commons at the same time, and, like his father, stood steadily by Grattan and the other advocates of Irish nationality to the last. Sir John was elected to the United Parliament, but died in the first year of his new position, and was immediately succeeded by Henry. Sir Henry Parnell was for many years a strong advocate of the rights of his fellow countrymen, and was in favor of the abolition of the Corn Laws, Short Parliaments, extension of the franchise, vote by ballot, and, curiously enough, the abolition of flogging in the army and navy, at a period when such doctrines were associated with advanced Radicalism. He was Secretary for War in Lord Grey's ministry for 1832, and Paymaster of the Forces in the Administration of Lord Melbourne and in 1841 he was created first Baron Congleton.

John Henry Parnell of Avondale was grandson of Sir John Parnell, and nephew of the first Lord Congleton. Making a tour through America while still a young man, he met,

at Washington, Miss Stewart. Miss Stewart was the daughter of Commodore Stewart, who played an important part in the history of the United States. It was he who, in his ship, the "Constitution," in the war between England and America in 1815, met, fought, beat and captured the two English vessels, the "Cyane" and the "Levant," with the loss of seventy-seven killed and wounded among the British, and only three killed and ten wounded in his own vessel. It is, perhaps, characteristic of the love of legality in his race that he did not enter upon this engagement until the British vessels first attacked, for he had received from a British vessel three days before the engagement a copy of the London Times, containing the heads of the Treaty of Ghent, as signed by the Ministers of the United States and Great Britain, and said to have been ratified by the Prince Regent. After a series of striking adventures, Stewart reached home with his vessel. His victory excited extreme enthusiasm among the Americans, and every form of public honor was bestowed upon him. In Boston there was a triumphal procession; in New York the City Council presented him with the freedom of the city and a gold snuff-box, and he and his officers were entertained at a dinner; at Philadelphia he was voted the thanks of the Commonwealth, and presented with a gold-bilted sword. Congress passed a vote of thanks to him and his officers, and struck a gold medal and presented it to him in honor of the event.

Afterwards Commodore Stewart was sent to the Mediterranean, where there was something approaching a mutiny amongst the officers under a different commodore. He soon came to a definite issue with his subordinates. He ordered a court-martial on a marine to be held on board one of his vessels. The officers preferred to discuss the case at their leisure in a hotel in Naples, and there tried and convicted the marine. The commodore promptly quashed the conviction and, when the Court passed a series of resolutions, put all the commanding officers of the squadron under arrest. The result was the complete restoration of order, and the approval of Commodore Stewart's conduct by the President and the cabinet.

Admiral Stewart, as he became, lived to a great age, and in time had taken a place in the affections of his countrymen somewhat similar to that of old Field Marshal Wrangel among the Germans a few decades later. He used to be known as "Old Ironsides," and the residence which he purchased in



Bordentown was baptized "Ironsides Park." He was once prominently spoken of as a candidate for the Presidency, and in less than four months sixty-seven papers pronounced in his favor. He was eighty-three years of age when Fort Sumter was fired upon. At once he wrote asking to be put into active service. "I am as young as ever," he declared, "to fight for my country." But, of course, the offer had to be refused. He survived nine years.

Thomas Sherlock, in his book, "The Life of Charles Stewart Parnell," describes the appearance and character of Commodore Stewart as follows:

"Commodore Stewart was about five feet nine inches high, and of a dignified and engaging presence. His complexion was fair, his hair chestnut, eyes blue, large, penetrating, and intelligent. The cast of his countenance was Roman, bold, strong and commanding, and his head finely formed. His control over his passions was truly surprising, and under the most irritating circumstance his oldest seaman never saw a ray of anger flash from his eye. His kindness, benevolence, and humanity were proverbial, but his sense of justice and the requisitions of duty were as unbending as fate. In the moment of greatest stress and danger he was as cool and quick in judgment as he was utterly ignorant of fear. His mind was acute and powerful, grasping the greatest or smallest subjects with the intuitive mystery of genius."

It is said that, in many respects, Mr. Parnell bore a strong resemblance to the characteristics of his grandfather, whose name he bore. In physique he was much less English or Irish than American. The delicacy of his features, the pallor of his complexion, the strong nervous and muscular system, concealed under an exterior of fragility, are characteristics of the American type of man. Mentally, also, his evenness of temper and coolness of judgment suggested an American temperament.

Mr. Parnell was born in Avondale, county Wicklow, in June, 1846. Curiously enough, nearly the whole of his early life was passed in England, and in entirely English surroundings. When he was six years of age he was placed at school in Yeovil, Somersetshire. Next, he was under the charge of the Rev. Mr. Barton at Kirk-Langley, Derbyshire; next, under the Rev. Mr. Wishaw, in Oxfordshire; and finally, he went to Cambridge University—the Alma Mater of his father. He



did not graduate and probably did not pay any great attention to the study of the curriculum of the university.

He was not a man of large literary reading, but he was a severe and constant student of scientific subjects, and was especially devoted to mechanics. It is said that he used to enjoy isolating himself from the enthusiastic crowds that met him everywhere in Ireland, and, in a room by himself, delight in studying mathematical books. He was a constant reader of "Engineering" and other mechanical papers, and he took the keenest interest in all machinery.

The surroundings of the house in which he was born were well calculated to arouse in young Parnell the hereditary disposition to strong national opinions. Wicklow, on the whole, is the most beautiful and the most historic county in Ireland, and Avondale is in the center of its greatest beauties and its most historic spots.

Many of the lessons which these historic spots were calculated to teach were reinforced by the servants around the family mansion. I have made the remark that it is particularly difficult to follow the mental history of a man who is neither introspective nor expansive; and it is not from the lips of Mr. Parnell himself that one could learn much of his internal history. But one day, sitting in his house in Avondale, he happened to mention the name of Hugh Gaffney, a gate-keeper in Avondale, and retold a story which the gate-keeper used to tell him when he was a youth. Gaffney was old enough to have seen some of the scenes of the Rebellion; and one of his stories was of a man who was taken by the English troops in the neighborhood. The sentence upon him was that he was to be flogged to death at the end of a cart. The interpretation of the sentence by Colonel Yeo—such was the name of the commander—was that the flogging was to be inflicted on the man's stomach instead of on his back. Gaffney saw the rebel flogged from the mill to the old sentry box in Rathdrum—the town near which Avondale is situated—and heard the man call out in his agony, "Colonel Yeo! Colonel Yeo!" and appeal for respite from this torture; and also heard Colonel Yeo reject the prayer with savage words; and finally saw the man, as he fell at last from sheer exhaustion. When Mr. Parnell told the story, in his usual tranquil manner, the thought suggested itself to my mind that, at last, I had reached one of the great influences that made Mr. Parnell the man

he was, and that in this poor gate-keeper was to be found the early instructor whose lessons on British rule and its meaning imbued the young and impressionable heir of the Parnell name and traditions with that love and admiration for British domination in Ireland which have characterized his public career.

Such stories appealed to what was, beyond doubt, the strongest feeling, the most positive instinct of Mr. Parnell's nature—his hatred of injustice. He had the loathing of masculine natures for cruelty in all forms. This feeling, though never expressed in words, finds strong manifestation often in acts. One of his acts while still the unknown squire, was to prosecute a man for cruelty to a donkey. Once, while a very important and vital resolution was under discussion at a meeting of the Irish party called to arrange the plan of the electoral campaign, the meeting was amused, and a little disconcerted to see Mr. Parnell rise with naïf unconsciousness, leave the chair, and disappear from the room. He was followed by a handsome dog, which had been presented to him by his friend and colleague, Mr. Corbet; and the meeting had to tranquilly suspend its discussions until the lead of the Irish people had seen after the dinner of a retriever. It was characteristic of the modesty and, at the same time, scornfulness of his nature, that all through the many attacks made upon him by Mr. Forster, and other gentlemen who wear their hearts upon their sleeves, he never once made allusion to his own strong love of animals; but to his friends he often expressed his disgust for the outrages that, during a portion of the agitation, were occasionally committed upon them.

In 1867 the ideas that had been sown in his mind in childhood first began to mature. His mother was then, as throughout her life, a strong Nationalist, and so was at least one of his sisters. There is a tradition among the survivors of the Literary staff of "The Irish People" newspaper of a young lady, closely veiled, coming with a contribution to the office of the journal during its troubled career. This was Miss Fanny Parnell. Many of the Fenian refugees found shelter and protection in the house of Mrs. Parnell, and were in this way enabled to escape from the pursuing bloodhounds of the law. It was at this epoch that the execution of Allen, Larkin and O'Brien took place in Manchester; and this, as has already been mentioned, was the turning point in the mental history of Mr. Parnell and set him irrevocably in favor of Nationalist principles.

However, it was a considerable time before he even thought of entering political life. Like his father, he spent some time in travel in America. While there he met with a railway accident in company with his brother, John "The best nurse I ever had," said Mr John Parnell to T. P. O'Connor in America, "was my brother Charlie." And he then remarked that for weeks his brother had remained night and day by his side.

In 1871 Mr. Parnell returned to Avondale and began the life of a country squire. His American blood showed itself in a keener sense of the possibilities of his property and of his own duties than are usually associated with the Irish landlord. Then, although one could not say he was a joyous man, he took a keen interest in life and everything going on around him, and could not, under any circumstances, keep from being actively occupied in some pursuit. He hunted and he shot like those around him, but, besides this, he set up a saw mill and brush factory, and sunk shafts in search of the mineral ore in which Wicklow was said to abound. He was a kind and generous landlord, and enjoyed the affection of all around him. His subsequent history has been told; and now the narrative returns to an account of his parliamentary career.

## CHAPTER VI.

### PARNELL AND BIGGAR JOIN HANDS—PROGRESS OF THE "ACTIVE" POLICY.

Mr. Biggar and Mr. Parnell brooded for some time over the strange spectacle of the impotence that had fallen upon the Irish Party. Both men were eager for practical results; and debates, however ornate and eloquent, which resulted in no benefit, appeared to them the sheerest waste of time and a mockery of their country's hopes and demands. Probably they drifted into the policy of "obstruction," so called, rather than pursued it in accordance with a definite plan originally thought out. When one now looks back upon the task at which these two men set themselves, it will appear one of the boldest, most difficult and most hopeless that two individuals ever proposed to set themselves to work out.

They set out, two of them, to do battle against 656; they had before them enemies, who, in the ferocity of a common hate and a common terror, forgot old quarrels and obliterated old party lines; while among their own party there were false men who hated their honesty and many true men who doubted their sagacity. In this work of theirs they had to meet a perfect hurricane of hate and abuse; they had to stand face to face with the practical omnipotence of the mightiest of modern empires; they were accused of seeking to trample on the power of the English House of Commons, and six centuries of Parliamentary government looked down upon them in menace and reproach. In carrying out their mighty enterprise, Mr. Parnell and Mr. Biggar had to undergo labors and sacrifices that only those acquainted with the inside life of Parliament can fully appreciate. Those who undertook to conquer the House of Commons had first to conquer much of the natural man in themselves. The House of Commons is the arena which gives the choicest food to the intellectual vanity of the British subject, and the House of Commons loves and respects only those who love and respect it. But the first principle of the active policy was that there should be absolute indifference to the opinions of the House of Commons, and so vanity had first to be crushed out. Then the active policy de-

mauded incessant attendance in the House, and incessant attendance in the House amounts almost to a punishment. And the active policy required, in addition to incessant attendance, considerable preparation; and so idleness, which is the most potent of all human passions, had to be gripped and strangled with a merciless hand. And finally there was to be no shrinking from speech or act because it disoblged one man or offended another; and therefore, kindness of feeling was to be watched and guarded by remorseless purpose. The years of fierce conflict, of labor day and night, and of non resistance to menace, or entreaty, or blandishment, must have left many a deep mark in mind and body "Parnell," remarked one of his followers in the House of Commons one day, as the Irish leader entered with pallid and worn face, "Parnell has done mighty things, but he had to go through fire and water to do them."

Mr. Biggar was heard before Mr. Parnell had made himself known; and to estimate the character of the member for Cavan—and it was a character worth study—one must read carefully, and by the light of the present day, the events of the period at which he first started on his enterprise. In the session of 1875 he was constantly heard of, on April 27 in that session he "espied strangers"; and, in accordance with the then existing rules of the House of Commons, all the occupants of the five different galleries, excepting those of the Ladies' Gallery, had to retire. The Prince of Wales was among the distinguished visitors to the assembly on this particular evening, a fact which added considerable effect to the proceeding of the member for Cavan. At once a storm burst upon him, beneath which even a very strong man might have bent. Mr. Disraeli, the Prime Minister, got up amid cheers from all parts of the House, to denounce this outrage upon its dignity, and to mark the complete union of the two parties against the daring offender, Lord Hartington rose immediately afterwards. Nor were these the only quarters from which attack came. Members of his own party joined in the general assault upon the audacious violator of the tone of the House. Mr. Biggar was, above all things, held to be wanting in the instincts of a gentleman. "I think," said the late Mr. George Bryan, another member of Mr. Butt's party, "that a man should be a gentleman first and a patriot afterwards," a statement which was of course received with wild cheers.



Finally, the case was summed up by Mr. Chaplin. "The honorable member for Cavan," said he, "appears to forget that he is now admitted to the society of gentlemen." This was one of the many allusions, fashionable at the time—among genteel journalists, especially—to Mr. Biggar's occupation. It was his heinous offense to have made his money in the wholesale pork trade.

"Heaven knows," says a writer in the "World," "that I do not scorn a man because his path in life has led him amongst provisions. But though I may unaffectedly honor a provision dealer who is a Member of Parliament, it is with quite another feeling that I behold a Member of Parliament who is a provision dealer. Mr. Biggar brings the manner of his store into this illustrious assembly, and his manner, even for a Belfast store, is very bad. When he rises to address the House, which he did at least ten times to-night, a whiff of salt pork seems to float upon the gale, and the air is heavy with the odor of the kippered herring. One unacquainted with the actual condition of affairs might be forgiven if he thought there had been a large failure in the bacon trade, and that the House of Commons was a meeting of creditors and the right honorable gentlemen sitting on the Treasury Bench were members of the defaulting firm who, having confessed their inability to pay nincence in the pound, were suitable and safe subjects for the abuse of an ungenerous creditor."

These things are mentioned by way of illustrating the marks and symptoms of the time through which Mr. Biggar had to live, rather than because of any influence they had upon him. On this self-reliant, firm, and masculine nature a world of enemies could make no impress. He did not even take the trouble to read most of the attacks upon him. Those that were made in the House of Commons in his own hearing neither touched him nor angered him. The only rancour he ever felt against individuals was for the evil they attempted to do to the cause of his country. This little man, calmly and placidly accepting every humiliation and insult that hundreds of foes could heap upon him, in the relentless and untiring pursuit of a great purpose, may by-and-by appear, even to Englishmen, to merit all the affectionate respect with which he is regarded by men of his own country and principles. The Irish people have long since decided between Mr. Biggar and the members of his own party, with whom he

was at war. If any one desired to see how far that party is removed from the party of to-day, he has but to read the descriptions of some of the encounters between the member for Cavan and some of his colleagues upon the coercion struggle of those days. Thus, on one occasion, Mr. McCarthy Downing, a so-called Nationalist, went out of his way to compliment Sir Michael Hicks-Beach on the courtesy with which he treated the Irish members when carrying through the House a bill destructive of the liberties of their country. This was the speech which drew from Mr. Ronayne the grim remark that such compliments to the Minister in charge of the Coercion Bill reminded him of the shake hands of a murderer with his executioner. On another occasion, when Dr. O'Leary proposed an adjournment of a stage of a debate on a Coercion Bill to another day, his own colleagues rose in revolt against the unreasonable proposal, and Dr. O'Leary, scared and overwhelmed, had to consult the convenience of the government to accelerate the destruction of his country's liberties and to withdraw his motion for adjournment. More interesting than these collisions with small and now forgotten men, was Mr. Biggar's conflict with the leader of his party. The contest between these two men is one of the most picturesque in Parliamentary history. Rarely has a struggle appeared more unequal. The House of Commons never had an opportunity of seeing Butt at his best, but with an audience before him sympathetic with his views, he was a speaker of a persuasiveness as great as that of Mr. Gladstone himself. There was not a resource of the orator, a trick of the lawyer, a device of the Parliamentary tactician's art unknown to him. He was, indeed, marked out as a leader of men in Parliamentary struggles. Mr. Biggar, on the other hand, had not one of the gifts that make a great parliamentarian. He spoke haltingly and with difficulty; his sparse education was not improved by reading; he was absolutely new to parliamentary, and, practically, to political life. But the moral chasm between Biggar and Butt was as wide as the intellectual chasm between Butt and Biggar. The relentless self-control in Biggar, the subordination of all his wants to his needs, his inflexible courage, and his unshaken persistence, made him a dangerous competitor for a man of the loose habits, of the easy self-indulgent nature, of the weak will and capricious purpose of Butt. Biggar was ultimately

conqueror in this struggle. Sheer strength of character broke down sheer intellectual superiority. The new policy, which had been inaugurated by Mr. Biggar in the session of 1875, was developed rather than formulated. It began simply in the practice of blocking a number of bills in order to bring them under the half-past twelve rule, which forbids opposed measures to be taken after that hour. It also became the custom of either, the member for Cavan or the member for Meade, to propose motions for adjournment in various forms when half-past twelve was reached, on the ground that proper discussion could not take place at so late an hour. Then, interstices of time which the government would gladly employ for advancing some stage of their measures were filled in by the Irish members. Thus, for instance, a bill standing for second reading would be approaching that stage at twenty minutes past twelve at an ordinary sitting, or half-past five on a Wednesday. To the horror and disgust of everybody else, Mr. Biggar or Mr. Parnell would rise and occupy the time between that hour and half-past twelve or a quarter to six, when contentious business could no longer be discussed, and further consideration of the measure had to be postponed to another day. In this manner the two members gradually felt their way, became more practiced in speaking, and obtained an intimate acquaintance with the rules of the House. Throughout all this time, of course, they were harassed by interruptions, shouts of "divide," groans and calls to order; and for a time, at least, Mr. Parnell used occasionally to lay himself open to effective interruption by his yet immature acquaintance with the laws of the Assembly. "How," said a young follower of his to the Irish leader, "are you to learn the rules of the House?" "By breaking them," was Mr. Parnell's reply; and this was the method by which he himself gained his information. It was not till the session of 1877 that Mr. Parnell and Mr. Biggar became engaged in the passionate and exciting scenes which made their names known all over the world, and brought the House of Commons definitely face to face with the new and portentous force which had unmasked itself within the parliamentary citadel. Any one who has been a member of the House of Commons will know how tremendous is its reserve power. There had been "obstructives," of course, before the time of Parnell and Biggar. During the great ministry of Mr. Gladstone, between 1868

and 1874, obstruction had been developed to a fine art by several of the gentlemen who at this moment held official positions under Lord Beaconsfield. Everybody remembers how the Church Bill and the Land Bill, the Ballot Bill, and the Bill for the abolition of purchase in the army had been dogged at every step of their progress by endless and silly amendments, by speeches against time, and by countless motions for adjournment. It was part of the skillful tactics of Parnell and Biggar that their intervention in the debates of the House was always rational. They did not indulge in any wild declamation, nor make any speeches full of empty and purposeless talk. Their plan was to propose amendments to the different measures before the House; and their amendments were rarely, if ever, open to the charge of irrelevance or frivolity. On March 26, 1877, there was a lengthy discussion on some new clauses of the Prison Bill for the better treatment of prisoners. At a little after one o'clock Mr. Biggar proposed to report progress. Some eight members, who had acted with the "obstructives" up to this time, now deserted; and, when the division was called, there were in favor of the adjournment but 10, while 138 voted against it. Motions for adjournment followed each other in rapid succession, and, at three o'clock in the morning, the Government gave way. Mr. Butt had watched these proceedings with no friendly eye. There was no doubt about his genuineness as a Home Ruler, but he had been a conservative for many years and a friend and associate of the party in power, and he was certainly considerably under the influence of its leaders. Curiously enough, one of the men who was supposed to have the most influence over him was the then Chief Secretary, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, though there had never been a Chief Secretary who met all demands for Irish reform with rejection more uncompromising and more insolent. It is characteristic of the nature of the two men that it was the attitude of Hicks-Beach towards Mr. Butt which drove Mr. Biggar, as much as anything else, forward into the policy he had now adopted. He was asked by Sir Michael to chide his supporters, and he consented. It showed a strange want of any appreciation of the real facts of the case that the Irish leader should have thus interpreted the request addressed to him. The recognition of his power came only when it was employed in meeting the views of the Ministry, and in yield-



ing to the temper of Parliament; it had received no recognition so long as it was used in pressing forward against the Ministry, and against the House—demands for the redress of the intolerable wrongs of his country. Where was his memory gone of the contemptuous rejection for the past three years of every one of the proposals that he made with the assent of the overwhelming majority of his countrymen? A leader who, with such recollections, and such incontestable proof of the futility of soft methods, of appeals to the sense of justice in English Ministries, and to the reason of Parliament, could think of the “dignity of Parliament,” and not the wrongs of Ireland, “lacked gall to make oppression bitter.” Mr. Butt, however, threw in his lot with the enemies of his country, and attacked his two subordinates with fierce anger and reproach.



Ornament on leather case of Book of Armagh.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers."



## CHAPTER VII.

### PIERCE CONTEMPT OF PARNELL FOR ENGLISH PARTIES—TURBULENT SESSIONS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Condemned by their own leader, and by the majority of their own party, Mr. Parnell and Mr. Biggar were naturally the more hated by the House of Commons, and their conduct was more bitterly resented; and the resolve to put them down grew more vehement and more passionate. It was on the South African Bill that the long-pent-up storm burst forth with tempestuous violence. On July 25, 1877, the House was in Committee on the Bill. Mr. Jenkins had rendered himself obnoxious to some of the members of his own party by his opposition to the measure, and Mr. Monk accused him of abusing the forms of the House. Mr. Jenkins rose to order, vehemently denied the charge, and then moved that those words be taken down. Mr. Parnell at once rose. "I second that motion," he said; "I think the limits of forbearance have been passed. I say I think that the limits of forbearance have been passed in regard to the language which honorable members opposite have thought proper to address to me and to those who act with me." At once Sir Stafford Northcote, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House, rose and moved that the latter words of Mr. Parnell be taken down. The motion of Mr. Jenkins was irregularly got rid of by the intervention of the Chairman of Committees—Mr. Raikes—who declared that the words of Mr. Monk were not a breach of order. The chairman, however, proceeded to raise another subject of dispute by calling upon Mr. Parnell to withdraw his statement, "accusing honorable members of this House of intimidation." The honorable member must withdraw that expression, said Mr. Raikes, amidst the cheers and intense excitement of the House. Mr. Parnell rose to explain; he was constantly interrupted by "conversation, coughs, exclamations, cries, and groans." He denounced the Bill as mischievous both to the colonists and to the native races, and instituted a comparison between Ireland and the South African colonies; "therefore," he went on, "as an Irishman, coming from a country which had experienced to

its fullest extent the result of English interference in its affairs, and the consequence of English cruelty and tyranny he felt a special satisfaction in preventing and thwarting the intentions of the Government in respect to this Bill."

The moment these words had been uttered, the House thought that it had at last caught the cool, wary, and dexterous Irish member in a moment of forgetfulness and passion, and that he had given the long-sought opportunity for bringing him to account. Amid loud shouts, Sir Stafford Northcote rose and moved that the words of Mr. Parnell be taken down; and this having been done, he proposed that all further business should be stopped, and that the Speaker should be sent for. The Speaker was brought in, the House filled with an excited crowd, and Sir Stafford Northcote moved that Mr. Parnell be "suspended till Friday next." Mr. Parnell was called upon to explain. While the House was storming around him, and he was brought face to face with the prospect of undergoing Parliamentary censure after a manner unprecedented, and thus viewed with horror by all the men around him, he began by a technical objection. He pointed out that another motion had been proposed to the House before that of Sir Stafford Northcote's, and that, therefore, the motion of the leader of the House was out of order. But the Speaker ruled this objection as untenable; and Mr. Parnell had to proceed with his own defence. He addressed to the House a speech full of the boldest defiance and of stinging suggestion. The House was now beside itself with rage, and there were loud shouts that Mr. Parnell should withdraw, as is the custom when the conduct of a member is under consideration. Mr. Parnell left his seat and calmly proceeded to a place in the Speaker's gallery, and from this point of vantage looked down on the proceedings in which he himself was the subject of debate.

Sir Stafford Northcote now moved that "Mr. Parnell having wilfully and persistently obstructed the public business, is guilty of contempt of the House, and that Mr. Parnell for his said offence be suspended from the service of the House till Friday next." A fatal blow was discovered in the proposal of Sir Stafford Northcote. Mr. Parnell had certainly declared his interest in "thwarting and preventing the designs," not of the House, which, of course, would be obstruction, but of the Government, which is the object and the legiti-

mate pursuit of every opponent of a Ministerial measure. Sir Stafford Northcote had evidently lost his head in his eagerness to throw a Christian to the lions, and he was obliged to postpone further debate upon the question until the following Friday. Mr. Parnell, escorted by Mr. Biggar, re-entered the House, stood up again, and resumed his speech exactly at the point at which he had been interrupted two hours before by the impulsive motion of Sir Stafford Northcote.

On the Friday following Sir Stafford Northcote proposed two new rules. The first was, that any member called to order twice by the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees could be suspended for the remainder of the sitting; and the second, that no member be allowed to propose more than once in the same sitting a motion for reporting progress of the adjournment of debate. The resolutions met with some criticism from the Liberal benches, but the Irish members offered no opposition, and the two rules were adopted for the session. On Wednesday, July 31, occurred the first of those prolonged sittings, which have since become so familiar. The Government, owing to the dogged and persistent opposition of Mr. Parnell and Mr. Biggar, and to some extent of the radicals below the gangway, were very far behind with their legislative proposals, and especially with the South African Bill. At last it was resolved that the measure should be pushed through on the night of Tuesday; and on that night, for the first time, the expedient of relays which has since become so familiar was employed. The Irish members, aware of the arrangement that had been made against them, accepted the challenge, and determined to carry on the contest as long as their strength would hold out. There were but a few of them to make the fight—seven in all. They were supported for some time by Mr. Courtney, who was as hostile as they to the principle of the South African Bill, and who has since been justified, as well as Mr. Parnell and Mr. Biggar, by the disastrous termination to the measures of which the South African Bill was the starting point. But Mr. Courtney gave up the struggle in the small hours of the night. The fight still went on. At a quarter-past eight in the morning, after he had been fifteen hours at work, Mr. Parnell retired to rest; he came back at a quarter-past twelve, four hours later, and resumed his share in the debates. At two o'clock the last amendment on the South African Bill was disposed of, and

the Bill was through. When the House rose it had been sitting for twenty-six hours. One other little incident is worth recording. Throughout the long watches of the night the ladies' gallery was occupied by one solitary and patient figure; this was Miss Fanny Parnell, who shared and inspired the convictions of her brother, and who afterwards gave to the Irish cause some of its most stirring lyrics and its ablest argumentative defences, and an incessant labor amid daily increasing weakness and fast approaching death.

This unprecedented sitting in the House of Commons produced in England a tempestuous burst of anger and excitement, and for some days Mr. Parnell, Mr. Biggar, and their associates were denounced with a wealth of invective that would not have been equal to the merits of Guy Fawkes or Titus Oates. In their own party, too, the dissent from their tactics was reaching a climax; Mr. Butt seemed resolved to throw down the final gage of battle, and call upon the party to make their own choice between the continuance of his leadership and the suppression of the two mutineers. But all efforts to get the party to take decisive action proved abortive. Time-servers and office-seekers, they wanted to survive till the advent of the blessed hour when the return of the Liberals to power would give them the long-desired chance of throwing off the temporary mask of national views, to assume the permanent livery of English officials. Before that period could arrive, they well knew that a General Election had to intervene, and who knew what control over that election might be exercised by such extremists as Mr. Parnell and Mr. Biggar? This fact adds another element of tragedy to the woeful eclipse in which the last days of Butt ended. His opponents were honest and resolute, his friends, self-seeking, treacherous and half-hearted, ready to turn without a blush or a pause from the worship of the setting to that of the rising sun.

There was another portent of the time which still more disquieted Butt, and brought the peril of the situation more clearly and unmistakably before his eyes. The policy of Mr. Parnell and Mr. Biggar might not as yet have won the intelligence of Ireland, but it had beyond all question gained its heart. The session of 1877 had ended on August 13; on the 21st of the same month there was a meeting in the Rotunda in Dublin in honor of Mr. Parnell and Mr. Biggar; the meet-



ing was crowded; the reception was enthusiastic; the verdict of Dublin was given, and it was in favor of the new men and the new policy.

The reader, to understand the success of the active policy, has to recall the fact which has been endeavored all through this narrative to imprint upon his mind as a central fact of Irish politics. This was that, since the betrayal of the national cause by Keogh and Sadleir in 1855, the heart of the Irish people had never been won for Parliamentary agitation; there was ever the tendency to the cynic doubtfulness of those who have once been greatly deceived. This had a bad effect in several ways. In the first place, it was a steady obstacle to that infectious enthusiasm by the aid of which alone the scattered interests and forces and tendencies of a nation can be moulded into the unity of a great national movement. It left the constituents to make the fight on local or capricious or non-essential issues instead of a common national platform; above all things, it left the Parliamentary Party without that force of national passion behind them without which, in a struggle in an assembly alien, ignorant and generally hostile like the House of Commons, the words of Irish national representatives were but as sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. To give the people faith—that was the first necessity of a great movement in Ireland; that was the object, and that is the chief justification of the policy of the active party.

Meantime the struggle was going on inside the bosom of the Home Rule Party itself. On Monday and Tuesday, January 14 and 15, 1878, a conference was held in Dublin. There had been reports that the two parties would come into serious collision at the meeting. A notice appeared in the name of Mr. Butt, recapitulating resolutions which had been passed after the election of the party in 1874—resolutions pledging the party to act independently of both the English parties, and at the same time in unity with each other, and containing the suggestion that “no Irish member ought to persevere in any course of action which shall be declared by a resolution adopted at a meeting of the Home Rule members to be calculated to be injurious to the national cause.”

On the one hand, Mr. O'Connor Power had given notice of a resolution which declared that, in consequence of the hostility with which the just and constitutional demands for self-government made by a majority of the Irish representatives



had been met "by both English parties in the House of Commons, it was essential to the success of the Irish cause that more determined and vigorous action should be taken by the Parliamentary Party."

As the time for the conference approached, however, Butt had again found that he was fighting without his army. A private meeting of the Irish members, held on the Saturday before the conference, arrived at a compromise. The rival resolutions were withdrawn, and a set of resolutions by a Mr. P. McCabe Fay were accepted, which, if anything, were more favorable to Mr. Parnell than to Mr. Butt.

So the conference ended in a drawn battle, but the session of 1878 was soon to show how impossible it was to do anything with the existing party, or with Mr. Butt himself. A more regular attendance on the part of members was requested, and the only result was that often when an important Irish Bill was proposed there were not half a dozen Irish members in their places. Joint action had been recommended on the Eastern Question, and when the great party division came the members took different sides. There was even a graver scandal, for Mr. Butt, the leader of the party, not only voted with the Ministry, and thereby swelled the majority of a party that had up to that time refused every single demand of the Irish people, but he spoke in a tone far more worthy of an Imperialist "jingo" than of an Irish Nationalist.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### RETIREMENT AND DEATH OF BUTT—PARNELL GAINING GROUND.

The victory of Mr Parnell at the conference had been immediately preceded by another important gain. There are no Irishmen more fierce or resolute in the national faith than the Irishmen settled in England and Scotland. They are, though this is not generally thought, far more extreme in their views than the majority of the Irish in America, and they have an unbroken unity and a clear-sighted appreciation of the essential truth in great national controversies that might well put to the blush the half-heartedness, the wavering purposes, and the divided counsels of the Irish who have remained in Ireland. The Irish in England were from the very first on the side with Mr Parnell. They were enrolled in an organization known as the Home Rule Confederation, and Mr. Butt was its president. At the annual convention of the Federation at the close of 1877, Mr. Butt was deposed, and Mr Parnell was put in his place. The man who proposed the change bore to Mr. Butt that extraordinary affection with which this weak, kindly, unassuming, and childishly simple old man was accustomed to inspire nearly in every man, and could with difficulty maintain his composure as he gave the tottering Cæsar the fatal stab.

Mr. Butt now virtually retired from the leadership of the Home Rule Party. His resignation of his position was not accepted, and he was induced to remain on the condition that his attendance should not be regular; this condition was for the purpose of allowing him to devote his attention to his practice. Like O'Connell, he had virtually to abandon his profession when he undertook the duties of Parliamentary leadership. In this way his already vast load of debt had been increased, and his hours of waking and sleeping were tortured by duns, by threats of proceedings, and all the other shifts and worries of the impecunious. His quarrel with the "obstructives" had now come to interfere with his financial as well as with his political position. A national subscription had been started. In Ireland the response of the people to the needs of their leaders has often been bountifully gen-

crous, more often than perhaps in any other country; but those who depend on the assistance of the public are subject to the chances of fortune that always dog the dependents in any degree on the popular mood. There are times and seasons when even the most popular leader will not receive one-tenth the support which will be given in more favorable circumstances, and the popular leader dependent for his living on the peace of the people has the life of a gambler or the theatrical speculator. The support of the people had been definitely transferred from Mr. Butt to Mr. Parnell, and the financial support followed the tide of popular favor. The subscription was a miserable failure, and Butt was now without any support but his profession.

But the time had passed when he could do anything there. The weakness of the heart's action, which had pursued him from his early years, was rapidly becoming worse, and in 1878 there were many warnings of the approaching end. In that year he made the remark to a friend, speaking of troublesome symptoms from his heart, "Is not this the curfew bell, warning us that the light must be put out and the fire extinguished?" Still he fought on, attending the law courts daily, and now and then joining a desperate attempt to meet his daily triumphant opponents. His last appearance was the meeting in Molesworth Hall, on February 4, 1879. He was at this time engaged in the cause celebre of *Baggot vs. Baggot*. The appearance of the old man at this meeting has left a deep and sad impression on the minds of all those who were present. When he came in, the look of death was on his face; the death of his hopes and his spirits had already come. There were many faces among those around that once had lighted at his look, and that now turned away in estrangement. "Won't you speak to me?" he said in trembling tones to one man who had been his associate in many fights and amid many stirring scenes. But his old persuasive eloquence was still as fresh as ever, and he defended his whole policy with a vigor, plausibility, and closeness of reasoning that were worthy of his best days. This was the last meeting he ever attended. The next day he fell sick. The heart had at last refused to do its work; the brain could no longer be supplied; he lingered for nearly a month with his great intellect obscured, and on May 5, 1879, he died.

The people retained a kindly feeling for him to the end,

but he had unquestionably outlived his usefulness; and his triumph over Mr. Parnell at this period of Irish history would have been a national calamity that might have brought hideous disasters. Sufficient time has elapsed since his death to pronounce a calm estimate of his career. The unwisdom of his policy was largely due undoubtedly to the difficulties of his circumstances. He had a wretched party; with one honest and unselfish man to five self-seekers; but he laid the foundations of a great party in the future, and, more than any other man, he prepared the people for the new struggle for self-government. It was his misfortune to come at the unhappy interval of transition from the bad and old and hopeless order of things to a new and a better and brighter epoch. Between the era of 1865 and the era of 1878 Ireland was, so far as constitutional movements were concerned, in a political morass. It was Butt that carried the country over that dangerous ground. His foot was light, and slippery, and timid; but the ground over which he had to pass was treacherous, perilous, and full of invisible and bottomless pools.

But all the same, it was well for Ireland that Butt died at this moment. The country was again approaching one of those crises the outcome of which was to mean either a re-plunge into the slough of despond, such as she had been immersed in from 1845 to 1865, or the start of a new era of hope, effort, and prosperity. If Butt had survived, and had retained the leadership, there is little doubt that he would have been incapable of rising to the height of the argument, and would have counselled shilly-shallying where it meant death, and moderation where extreme courses were required to avert a national disaster, wholesale, violent, and perhaps fatal; or, if he had not retained the full leadership by the destruction of the rising efforts of Mr. Parnell and Mr. Biggar, and if he and they still remained in political existence, and to some extent in political alliance, then there would have been divided counsels; and the time was one for unity. All the meanness and servility and half-heartedness of the country would have found in Mr. Butt a rallying point, and the crisis was one that demanded all the energy and courage and concentrated purpose of the country.







MICHAEL DAVITT



THOMAS STADDON



JOHN E. REDMOND



JOHN DILLON

## CHAPTER IX.

### MICHAEL DAVITT, "TRIBUNE OF THE IRISH PEOPLE" AND FATHER OF THE LAND LEAGUE.

During the earlier months of 1879 the attention of the Chief Secretary had been called more than once to the calamity that was impending over Ireland. He received all these statements with easy and jaunty denials. At last, on May 27, when the House was adjourning for the Whitsuntide recess, the Irish members made a final attempt to force the condition of the country upon the attention of the Chief Secretary. Entreaty, argument, intimate acquaintance with the facts of the case; graphic pictures of the dire distress of the country; all were lost on Mr. Lowther. He was ready to go so far as to acknowledge that there was "some" depression in the agriculture of Ireland, but he went on to say he was glad to think that that depression, although undoubted, was "neither so prevalent nor so acute as the depression existing in other parts of the United Kingdom." "Seldom," justly remarks Mr. A. M. Sullivan, "did an English Minister speak a sentence destined to have more memorable results. In that moment Mr. James Lowther sealed the doom of Irish landlordism"; for Mr. Lowther's answer drove Mr. Parnell into the ranks of the Land League. The agrarian movement in Ireland meantime had been greatly stimulated by Mr. Davitt; a remarkable man with a remarkable history.

Michael Davitt was born in 1846, near the small village of Straid, in the county of Mayo. His father was a farmer who was among the many thousands of victims of those wholesale evictions which have followed the curse of Landlordism in Ireland. Mr. Davitt was but four years of age when he saw his home destroyed. His father and mother went to England, and had to beg through the streets of England for bread. The family settled in the little town of Haslingden in Lancashire. His mother was in the habit of frequently repeating the details of this cruel and memorable episode in his earliest years; and, undoubtedly, it was this eviction scene which influenced the fortunes of his entire family, and has been the fiercest incentive of Davitt's attitude towards landlordism ever since. Over

and over again references to this incident occur in his speeches. Replying once to an ungenerous attack made upon him, which appeared under the name of the late Archbishop MacHale, though probably never written by him, Mr. Davitt wrote:

"Some twenty-five years ago my father was ejected from a small holding near the parish of Straid, in Mayo, because unable to pay a rent which the crippled state of his resources, after struggling through the famine years, rendered impossible. Trials and sufferings in exile for a quarter of a century, in which I became physically disabled for life, a father's grave dug beneath American soil, myself the only member ever destined to live or die in Ireland, and this privilege existing only by virtue of ticket-of-leave, are the consequences which followed that eviction."

When he was a child he was sent to a mill to work, and there he was by an accident deprived of his right arm. At this time he had received but the merest rudiments of education, and this accident obtained for him the advantage of another instalment of instruction. At eleven years of age he secured employment in the local post-office; and as the post-master had also a business in printing and stationery, Mr. Davitt had an opportunity of taking an occasional peep at books.

In this way he had already attained some prominence among the Irishmen of his district; but up to this time he had not formed strong national opinions; or, if there were the germs of such opinions in his mind, they had not assumed definite shape. One night he went to hear an address on an Irish subject. The wrongs of Ireland were narrated by an eloquent tongue. All the latent forces and unformed notions in Mr. Davitt's nature were at once crystallized; and from that hour forward he was an ardent Irish Nationalist. He soon became a member of the Fenian organization, and he took part in the attempted seizure of Chester Castle. Unable to shoulder a rifle with his single arm, he carried a small store of cartridges in a bag made from a pocket-handkerchief.

After the failure of the enterprise, he managed to escape arrest and returned to Haslingden; but he soon entered on active operations again in connection with the movement, and was employed in the work of purchasing arms and forwarding them to Ireland. On May 14, 1870, he was arrested in London

along with an Englishman named John Wilson, a gunsmith of Birmingham, and he was convicted mainly on the evidence of an informer named Corydon, and sentenced to fifteen years penal servitude. He was often subjected, like other Irish political prisoners, to that brutality of punishment which England and Russia are alone among European countries in inflicting upon political prisoners. It is impossible for a man of any nationality to read his own account of the sufferings and indignities through which he had to pass without feelings of burning anger. A rebel against laws which had broken up his home, impoverished and exiled those dearest to him, he had resorted to the only weapons which then seemed capable of arresting the attention of that country whose apathy to Irish ruin Mr. Gladstone has so well described, and he was but antedating reforms, most of which have since passed into law; but he was sent to herd with murderers, pickpockets, and burglars, passed through solitary confinement, and was overworked, underfed, and exposed to all changes of the seasons.

At last, on Wednesday morning, December 19, 1877; after seven years and seven months of this dread suffering, he was released. A series of enthusiastic receptions awaited him and the three other Fenian prisoners who had been released about the same time, namely, Color-Sergeant McCarthy, Corporal Thomas Chambers, and Private John P. Bryan. It had been constantly denied that Sergeant McCarthy had been ill-treated in prison, and asserted that his health had in no way suffered. Two days after his arrival in Dublin, however, McCarthy gave testimony that could no longer be denied. Mr. Davitt, McCarthy, and the two other released prisoners had been invited by Mr. Parnell to breakfast with him in Morrison's Hotel. While they were awaiting breakfast, McCarthy was observed to grow pale and totter across the room, and, having been laid on the sofa, in a few minutes he was dead. The twelve years of penal servitude had at last done their work.

Mr. Davitt then proceeded on a lecturing tour throughout England and Scotland. Later on, he determined to go to America to see his mother and other relatives who had settled in the town of Manayunk in Pennsylvania. He landed in New York about the beginning of August, 1878. At this time he had very few acquaintances in America; he soon,



however, came in contact with some leading Irishmen settled in that country, and made a favorable impression upon them. After various consultations, Mr. Davitt formed an outline of a land movement, but his ideas were still in a crude and indefinite shape.

When he returned to Ireland, time and the seasons fought upon his side. Widespread distress threatened to be most severe in the West, and curiously enough, there already existed in that region the germs of a land movement. The tenants had kept up some form of association from the moment at which the worthlessness of the Land Act of 1870 was discovered. In Dublin, for instance, there was an organization known as "The Central Tenants' Defence Association," the object of which was the attainment of what afterwards became known as the "Three F's." There was also a local organization which subsequently, perhaps, did more than any other to beget the Land League; this was the Tenants' Defence Association of Balinasloe. The foremost figure of this association was a man named Matthew Harris. Matthew Harris was one of the most interesting and striking figures of the Irish movements of the last thirty years. During all this period he devoted himself with self-sacrificing and unremitting zeal to the attainment of complete redress of his country's grievances. In this respect politics were with him an absorbing passion, almost a religion. In pursuit of this high and noble end he risked death, lost liberty, and ruined his business prospects. Eager, enthusiastic, vehement, he had at the same time that grim tenacity of purpose by which forlorn hopes are changed into triumphant fruitions. He fought the battle against landlordship in the dark as well as in the brightest hour with unshaken resolution. Reared in the country, from an early age he saw landlordship in its worst shape and aspect; his childish recollections were of cruel and heartless evictions. Thus it was that in every movement for the liberation of the farmer or of Ireland during the last years of his life he was a conspicuous figure, as hopeful, energetic, laborious, in the hour of despair, apathy, and lassitude, as in times of universal vigor, exultation and activity.

But it was not in the county of Galway that this movement took its birth. Mr. Davitt, as has been seen, was a native of the neighboring county of Mayo, and there he determined to make the first start. The Land League may be dated from



one of these meetings. This was a gathering which assembled on April 20, 1879, at Irishtown, in the county of Mayo. This meeting was convened for the purpose of protesting against some acts of oppression on the part of the landlords of the district. The promoters of the meeting were Mr. Davitt and Mr. Brennan, the latter afterwards secretary of the Land League. Mr. Davitt did not attend the meeting, and the chief speaker at it was Mr. O'Connor Power, M. P. Several other meetings followed. The deepening distress among the farmers and the increase of evictions by the landlords supplied an impetus which had the effect of advancing the movement with extraordinary rapidity. The times, in fact, were ripe enough for an agrarian revolt. But, as yet, the movement was local and obscure. Scarcely any reports found their way into the metropolitan newspapers, and the country was generally unconscious of the portentous new birth. Deservedly great as was the influence of Mr. Davitt, and immense as were his exertions, the movement could not be said yet to have reached its pinnacle until the leader came, to whom, at this moment, the eyes and hopes and affections, of all the Irish Nationalists were gradually turning. One of the great forces which had inspired the hope and strength which made the new movement possible was the spirit excited throughout Ireland by the attitude of Mr. Parnell and Mr. Biggar in the House of Commons. The scenes—vexatious, indecorous, wanton, or boorish, as they appeared to the English public—were to the people of Ireland the electric messages of new hope. Every word of these scenes was read with fierce and breathless eagerness. The representatives of a country trodden under foot for centuries were seen in the citadel of the enemy, aggressive and defiant. The Parliament that trampled on every Irish demand for so many generations was seen raging in hysteric and impotent fury against the growing omnipotence of the two determined men. The movement that starts from 1879 will not be understood unless the fact is grasped that Ireland at that moment was living under the burning glow of Parliamentary “obstruction.” The temper which this fact produced was the original impulse in preventing the farmers of 1879 from lying down, dumb, helpless, and cowering, under eviction, famine, and plague, as was done by their fathers in 1846-47.

The position Mr. Parnell had already attained marked him

out as a man who, if he undertook the leadership of a movement, would carry it through every defile of difficulty and danger to the end. He was rapidly becoming the idol of the people, who could fuse their passions and their affections into a united and mighty effort. For a considerable time Mr. Parnell hesitated before taking a step beyond the "Three F's," but at last he crossed the Rubicon and joined the ranks of those who declared that the struggle on the Land Question should only end with the transfer of the proprietorship of the soil from the landlord to the tiller. This was to be the final settlement of the question; but, meanwhile, the wolf was at the door. How was the emergency of deepening distress, of ever-advancing famine and ever-increasing eviction to be met? This was the terrible problem which Mr. Parnell had now to face.



Ornament on top of Devenish Round Tower,  
From Petrie's "Round Towers," 400.

## CHAPTER X.

ACUTE STAGE IN THE LAND AGITATION—PARNELL ADVISES, "KEEP  
A FIRM GRIP OF YOUR HOLDINGS."

And now I have come to one of the cross-roads in my story. All that I have written will have failed in its purpose if the readers do not see the road to take at this crisis, clearly marked out as with an iron finger. 1846 and 1847 left two memories: the memory of the terrible suffering, and the memory of how that suffering was submitted to. Ever since there has been no feeling so bitter in the hearts of Irishmen, especially the hearts of young Irishmen, as the feeling that much of the awful suffering could have been prevented if the people only had the courage to act in their own defence; to refuse to allow food to be exported from a starving nation; to refuse the payment of impossible rents that one man might luxuriate in an hour of national cataclysm and tens of thousands perish in the agonies of hunger and of typhus fever; to refuse submission to decrees of eviction, and, through eviction, of death or exile from lands brought to fertility by their toil, from houses built in their own sweat and blood and tears. And this is something more than a mere feeling. The idea will stand the test of the severest examination, that in a moment of national crisis, such as the Irish famine, the safety of the nation demanded some sacrifice on the part of the landlords; a sacrifice best if willingly made, as by the landlords in England and in Scotland; in any case a sacrifice, whether willing or unwilling

Mr. Parnell found the majority of the farmers face to face with either of these two dilemmas: if they had all the rent, they might give every penny to the landlord, and allow themselves, their wives, and their children to perish. If they had not the rent, and the landlord insisted on his "rights," they were subject to eviction on a scale as wholesale as the clearances that followed 1846 and 1847. To call upon the people, under circumstances like these, to pay all their rent, was to recommend them to follow the example of 1846 with the sequels of 1847—wholesale starvation and wholesale eviction. This was not the policy that recommended itself to

Mr. Parnell; such a policy would have been that of a coward and a traitor. The first Land meeting attended by Mr. Parnell took place at Westport on June 8, 1879. Mr. Parnell, in his speech, laid down on clear lines the Land policy of the future and the policy of the hour. He declared in favor, not of the "Three F's," but of Peasant Proprietary.

"In Belgium," said Mr. Parnell, "in Prussia, in France, and in Russia the land has been given to the people; to the occupiers of the land. In some cases the landlords have been deprived of their property in the soil by the iron hand of revolution; in other cases, as in Prussia, the landlords have been purchased out. If such an arrangement could be made without injuring the landlord, so as to enable the tenant to have his land as his own, and to cultivate it as it ought to be cultivated, it would be for the benefit and prosperity of the country."

But this, as he said immediately, was to be regarded as the final settlement of the question; the immediate point was what the people were to do in order to avert the calamity which was at that moment at their very doors.

"Now," he said, "what must we do in order to induce the landlords to see the position? You must show the landlords that you intend to hold a firm grip of your homesteads and land."

The phrase had much appropriateness to the situation and to the time that it at once passed into men's mouths. While in the train that brought him to the meeting, Mr. Parnell was passing over in memory some of the scenes in which Mr. Biggar and himself had taken part in Parliament. He was musing over the deadly tenacity with which the member for Cavan always stuck to his purpose. Tenacity was translated into the shorter word "grip," and thus was born the memorable and potent phrase "hold," or, as it was afterwards expressed, "keep a firm grip of your homesteads and land."

From the moment Mr. Parnell put himself at the head of the Land movement it spread with enormous rapidity, and soon reached startling proportions. Meeting after meeting was held in many parts of Ireland, and before long it was evident that Mr. Parnell was at the head of the mightiest popular movement since the days of O'Connell and 1845.

Meantime the Government and the London press looked on with sinister eye. A central organization was formed in Sep-

tember, 1879. On October 21, 1879, a meeting was held by circular in the Imperial Hotel, Lower O'Connell (then Sackville) street; Mr. A. J. Kettle presided. The Land League was then and there founded. The following resolutions set forth the principles of the new organization:

I. That the objects of the League are, first, to bring about a reduction of rack-rents; second, to facilitate the obtaining of the ownership of the soil by the occupiers.

II. That the objects of the League can be best attained (1) by promoting organization among the tenant farmers; (2) by defending those who may be threatened with eviction for refusing to pay unjust rents; (3) by facilitating the working of the Bright Clauses of the Land Act during the winter; and (4) by obtaining such reform in the laws relating to land as will enable every tenant to become the owner of his holding by paying a fair rent for a limited number of years.

Mr. Parnell was elected president, and Mr. Kettle, Mr. Davitt, and Mr. Brennan were appointed honorary secretaries. Mr. J. G. Biggar, M. P., Mr. W. H. O'Sullivan, M. P., and Mr. Patrick Egan were appointed treasurers, and a resolution calling upon Mr. Parnell to go to America and obtain assistance was passed. Mr. John Dillon was to accompany Mr. Parnell to America.

This was the first time that a leader of a constitutional movement had gone among the Irish in America for the purpose of obtaining assistance for the people at home. Mr. Parnell's tour was a series of enthusiastic receptions. Wherever he went, and in nearly every town through which he passed, he addressed thousands of people. Officials of the United States attended and presided over his meetings, and at last he was paid the compliment of which only two other men—Kossuth and Dr. England—had been the recipients in the whole course of American history: he was permitted to address the House of Representatives at Washington. The financial results of his tour were extraordinarily large. The Land League, owing to the severity of the distress throughout the country, had resolved to devote a portion of its funds to the relief of the distress. The funds raised by Mr. Parnell were divided into two parts; one for the purpose of organization, the other for the relief of distress. For both, about \$360,000 had been subscribed.

The indirect effects of this tour were, perhaps, even more



important. The reality of Irish distress could no longer be denied, and there grew up a competition between different sections as to which should most liberally contribute towards the movement for preventing famine. Thus, although Mr. Lowther as Chief Secretary had denied the existence of distress, the fact had been brought so clearly home to the mind of the Lord-Lieutenant that his wife, the Duchess of Marlborough, issued an appeal, giving a dark picture of the state of the country, and formed a relief committee. The Lord Mayor of Dublin for 1880 happened to be a man of great energy and ability, Mr. E. Dwyer Gray, and he also formed a committee of relief; and thus, by the beginning of 1880, no fewer than three committees were working to prevent the occurrence of famine. Thus the action of Mr. Parnell and the Land League had brought the condition of the country from the region of debate into that of admitted fact, notorious to all the nations of the world.

Even Mr. Lowther and the Parliament were compelled at last to listen. Acknowledging the distress, they adopted a method for meeting it which is perhaps unexampled even in the history of the legislation of the House of Commons on the Irish land question. While the landlords were scattering notices of eviction over the country wholesale, the Government conceived the felicitous idea that the landlords formed the most suitable agency for supplying relief to the tenants. Accordingly a Bill was introduced, the effect of which was to lend to the landlords the sum of £1,092,985 without interest for two years, and one per cent at interest afterwards. This money was to be used by the landlords in giving employment to their tenants, and in thus preventing the spread of famine. With unconscious humor this extraordinary measure was called "The Relief of Distress Act."

In March, 1880, Lord Beaconsfield decided to dissolve Parliament. The cry he chose was an anti-Irish manifesto. I will not stop in this place to examine into the morality of the statesman who, at the moment when Ireland was in the very agony of famine, did not scruple to arouse the fierce racial passions of the more powerful against the weaker nation.

The news of the impending dissolution reached Mr. Parnell on March 8, when he was speaking at Montreal. At once he saw that it was necessary for him to proceed to Ireland without one moment's delay. His lecture delivered, he started for New York. On the very morning of his departure he laid the

foundation of a Land League in America, and on March 10th he sailed for home. He reached Queenstown on March 21st; the Dissolution took place on March 24th, and the first election in Ireland was on April 1st. The interval for a general electoral campaign was small indeed. However, the moment he landed in Ireland he proceeded to fight the election with an energy that seemed diabolic. He rushed from one part of the country to another, made innumerable speeches, had interviews with most of the Parliamentary candidates, himself stood for three constituencies. Throughout all this feverish struggle there was ever by his side, sharing, and often doing most of his work, the bright, fiercely industrious, sleeplessly active young secretary whom he had summoned to him in America.

Mr. Parnell fought the entire election with the sum of £1,250—£1,000 which he obtained as a personal loan, £100 sent from Liverpool, and £150 which was obtained by his astute secretary from political opponents after a fashion not unamusing. He was thus unable to put forward candidates for several constituencies in which his name would have ensured success, and he was obliged to put up with the wrecks of broken faith and falsified pledges which previous Parliaments had laid high and dry on the political shore. In some other constituencies he did not find time or opportunity to interfere at all. And in this way he and the constituencies and the Irish cause were deprived of many a man who might have swelled the ranks of those who fought throughout the memorable years between 1880 and 1885. His toughest contest was in the city of Cork, which he won from Dr. Nicholas D. Murphy, a characteristic specimen of the class of Catholic Whigs whose timidity and treachery have been one of the most potent agencies in the hands of English Ministers for prolonging the reign of Irish misery and of Irish servitude. The result of the whole election was that there were sixty-eight men returned as Home Rulers. The deceptiveness of this total will be judged from the fact that among the Home Rulers were reckoned such men as Mr. J. Orrell Lever, returned as one of the members for Galway, and Mr. Whitworth, returned for Drogheda. Of the other Home Rulers the majority were reckoned supporters of Mr. Shaw, and but a small minority were openly pledged to follow Mr. Parnell; a considerable number had not made a definite choice between the policies of the rival leaders.

## CHAPTER XI.

### EARLY LIFE OF JUSTIN M'CARTHY.

The struggle between the two sections of the Home Rule Party soon began. Without any consultation with Mr. Parnell a meeting of the new party was called for. Several of the new members refused to attend. A second meeting had to be convened, and this took place at the City Hall, Dublin, on May 17th. On this occasion nearly every one of the new men who had been returned to support Mr. Parnell was present. To the general world they were unknown, obscure, and to some extent despised, and many of them were young. But there was scarcely one of them whose previous career had not been a preparation for the position which he now held, and who had not been living a life either of action or of thought to which membership of a party led by such a leader as Mr. Parnell was an appropriate climax. Amid their varied characters they all possessed something alike in a certain dash of fanaticism. Mr. Justin McCarthy had been elected before. Almost from his entry into the House of Commons he had drifted towards the side of Mr. Parnell. Some surprise was felt when he consented to stand and be elected as an Irish member, probably there was more than one city in England or Scotland that would have felt honor by such a representative as the author of the "History of Our Own Times," and there certainly would in time have been a Liberal Administration that would have been glad to have counted him among its members. Even many Irishmen at the start of Justin McCarthy's career may have felt that he would have taken his place in the ranks of an English Liberal Government as appropriate as in those of an Irish National Party. And yet Justin McCarthy had a past of which but few people knew; but to those who knew that past, its most complete and fitting sequel was that Mr. McCarthy should be one of the leaders of the first really independent party in the British Parliament.

Justin McCarthy was born in Cork in 1830. When he was a boy the capital of Munster could lay claim to really deserving the traditional reputation of the province for learning. Mr. McCarthy's father was one of the best classical scholars

of the day, and there was at that time a schoolmaster named Goulding; the name is familiar to many a Cork man still; who was a really fine scholar. Justin McCarthy was one of Goulding's pupils, and when he left school he had the not common power even among hard students of being able to read Greek fluently, and to write as well as translate Latin with complete ease. He had taught himself shorthand, and his first employment was that of a reporter on the Cork Examiner. It may be an interesting fact to note that his hand still retains its cunning. There are two other important reminiscences of Mr. McCarthy's reporting days. He was present at the meeting in Cork at which the late Judge Keogh swore that oath which played so tragic a part in Irish history; and he was also present at the famous dinner at which Lord Fitzgerald, then a rising young lawyer, in the ardor and virulence of his patriotism, bearded a Lord Lieutenant, and scandalized an audience of Cork's choicest Whigs. It was in 1847 that Mr. McCarthy started his professional life, and everybody knows that all that was young, enthusiastic, and earnest in Cork shared the political aspirations of that stormy time. There had been in existence for many years a debating society known as the "Scientific and Literary Society," and one of the many forms in which the new spirit roused by Young Ireland showed itself was the starting of a body known as the Cork Historical Society, as a rival to the older and tamer association. Among the members of this body were many young fellows who afterwards rose to importance. Sir John Pope Hennessy, and Justin McCarthy himself, were among its first recruits. The Historical Society became a recruiting ground for Young Ireland; nearly all its members joined the party of combat, and they founded one of the many Confederate Clubs that were started to prepare for the coming struggle.

President Grevy in his sober age remembers the day when he mounted a barricade. Similarly Justin McCarthy, in his maturity of philosophic calm, can look back to a time when he dreamed of rifles and bayonet charges, and death in the midst of fierce fight for the cause of Ireland. To those who know him there is no difference in the man of to-day and the man of '48. He has still the same unflinching courage as then. In this respect, indeed, Justin McCarthy is a singular mixture of incompatibilities. There is no man who enjoys



the hour more keenly. He has the capacity of M. Renan for finding the life around him amusing, enjoys society and solitude, work and play, a choice dinner or an all-night sitting. But he has eminently "a two o'clock in the morning courage" — a readiness to face the worst without notice. With his advanced years he is still a man of sanguine temperament; but in '48 he was only eighteen. He naturally, therefore, belonged to the section which had Mitchell for its apostle, and open and immediate insurrection for its gospel. Mitchell was arrested, and no attempt was made to rescue him; and there were many among the companions of McCarthy who saw in this failure the death of their hopes, the end of their efforts for the Irish cause. Justin McCarthy was not one of these.

Even after Mitchell's arrest, and the miserable fiasco in which the rebellion of 1848 had ended, there were still some young and unconquerable men who thought that all hopes of resurrection through revolution should not be allowed to die. Probably they did not hope to win in the struggle against the might of England; but the awful tragedy thus being enacted in Ireland made acquiescence a crime, and they resolved to do something which would get the world to stop and listen, and perhaps pity and help. If they could not win, they would show at least that there were some Irishmen who knew how to die, and, perchance, out of their graves might come some hope for the awful despair of the Irish nation in this epoch of famine, plague, and eviction. They enrolled members, gathered arms, drilled, settled a scheme of simultaneous revolt in various parts of the country. In all these things Justin McCarthy took his part, and in the region where the Cork Park now stands, the future historian swore in the members of a revolutionary organization. The effort ended as so many before and since: there was a mistake about the signal; the simultaneous outbreak did not take place, and the few sporadic risings which did break out were crushed.

With this episode ended for the moment Justin McCarthy's political history, and from this period, for many years, his story is that of the literary man. In the year 1851 Mr McCarthy first tried his fortunes in London. The attempt ended in failure, and he had to return to the reporter's place in Cork. Not long after this he met with his first piece of luck. There was at that time a Royal Commission for inquir-



ing into the fairs and markets of Ireland, and the secretary having broken down, Justin McCarthy was taken on as the official shorthand writer. His aptitude was such that some member of the Commission urged him to again go to London, and armed him with letters of introduction to persons of influence. This was in 1852. McCarthy again tried his chance and went to the Times and other offices, but without success. Before he could continue this fruitless search he heard of the Northern Times, the first provincial of England, which was just about to be started in Liverpool, applied for a situation, and was accepted.

But he was still only a reporter, and even he himself did not yet very well know whether he was fitted for better things. He worked on, gave literary lectures, and in the end was allowed the privilege of contributing to the editorial columns. He remained in Liverpool till 1860; in that year the Northern Times, pressed hard by more daring rivals, failed. McCarthy was contended for by several Liverpool journals, but he declined all, fixed in the resolve to make or mar his fortune in London. At this time the young journalist had a counsellor who for many years was the arbiter of his destiny. Before he left Cork he had seen, but he had never spoken to, Miss Charlotte Allman, a member of the well-known Munster family, and, in the meantime, Miss Allman had come to reside with her brother in Liverpool. The two young people resolved to marry, in spite of the strong opposition of relatives and in face of the frowning fortunes of a young, a badly paid, and as yet unknown journalist, and in 1855 they were married in the town of Macclesfield. To those who knew Mrs McCarthy there is no need to dilate on the resistless charm of her truly beautiful nature. She never wrote a line; she did not even pretend to any literary power; but she had the keen intelligence of sympathy, she had faith in her husband, and she had indomitable courage. It was she that induced Mr. McCarthy to refuse all the Liverpool offers, and that turned his face steadily to the larger hopes of London. The joint capital of the young couple when they landed in London was £10. Of that they spent more than £1 in buying an olive or some other sprout which was planted with lofty hopes in the garden of their new house in Battersea, and which, of course, perished after a short and sickly existence.

## CHAPTER XII.

### M'CARTHY'S NOTABLE LITERARY AND POLITICAL CAREER.

Mr. McCarthy's first engagement in London was as a Parliamentary reporter on the *Morning Star*. He found time to do other work in the intervals of this hard occupation, and, mainly through the persuasions of his wife, tried his hand at an essay for one of the big magazines. He had taught himself French, German, and Italian; was familiar with the three literatures, and his first attempt at essay-writing had Schiller for its subject. He next tried the *Westminster Review*, and two articles of his in that periodical suggested views so novel, and at the same time so correct, that they attracted the attention of John Stuart Mill. The philosopher was introduced to the young writer, showed a friendly interest in his welfare, and helped to advance his fortunes. Promotion at last began to come rapidly. In the autumn of 1860 he was appointed foreign editor of the *Morning Star*, and in 1865 he became editor-in-chief. Those who remember the journal and the times when it lived will know what splendid service it did to the cause of Ireland, which at that period seemed terribly hopeless indeed; and its tone of energetic and even fierce advocacy of Irish national claims was, of course, largely due to the inspiration of the ardent Irishman who was then at its head. It was while he was in this position that Mr. McCarthy became intimately acquainted with Mr. John Bright. The great tribune was fond of spending some hours in the office of the *Star*, in which his sister, the widow of Samuel Lucas, who was the brother of the Frederick Lucas of Irish history, had some shares; and many an hour did the editor and politician spend together in discussing the oratorical exploits of Mr. Gladstone, the thing that did duty for a conscience for Mr. Disraeli, or the comparative merits of Shakespeare and Milton. It was one of the unpleasant consequences of the fierce struggles of the last few years that those two old friends had ceased even to speak to one another. But in 1868, when it became clear that Mr. Bright was going to become a Minister, and when he sold out his share in the *Morning Star*, Mr. McCarthy lost all desire to be

further connected with the journal, and resigned his position.

He then went to America. His reputation had gone before him, and he found an embarrassing choice of offers awaiting him. He had, while still editor of the *Star*, published his first novel, "Paul Massey" (this appeared in 1866), a story written after the sensational fashion of that hour, which Mr. McCarthy has since suppressed. This had been followed in 1867 by the "Waterdale Neighbors," a charming story. One of Mr. McCarthy's first engagements was to write a series of stories for the *Galaxy*, then perhaps the chief literary magazine in America. He was also asked to lecture, and partly because the terms were extremely remunerative, and partly out of a desire to see the country, he consented. He was an extremely successful lecturer, and between his pen and his tongue found the United States the *El Dorado* it has proved to so many from the old world. He paid a brief visit to London in the middle of 1870, returned again in the autumn of that year, and finally in the autumn of 1871 came back to England for good. His name meantime had been kept steadily before the English reading public. In 1869, "My Enemy's Daughter," which had been written nearly ten years before, ran through Belgravia, then under the management of Miss Braddon. Immediately after his return Mr. McCarthy was offered, and accepted, an engagement on the *Daily News* as Parliamentary leader writer. For years he was one of the best known figures in the Reporter's Gallery, and was looked up to by most of his editorial colleagues, as the man who took the most rapid and the most accurate view of a Parliamentary situation, and as having the most sagacious head of the political writers of his time. His literary fortunes, meantime, steadily advanced; and in "Dear Lady Disdain" he wrote a second novel which everybody talked about, and upon which there was a real run. With the versatility which is so singular he soon after devoted himself to another and a very different kind of work, undertaking a contemporary chronicle, under the title "History of Our Own Times," the first two volumes of which were published in 1878. Everybody knows the result. The book—to quote the hackneyed expression—took the town by storm. It was praised with equal fervor by Conservative and by Liberal critics; its style was as much an object of eulogy as its tone and its temper. It was, indeed, a model of what contemporary history should be. Equal jus-

tice was dealt out to all parties, the portraits of men were clear-cut and sympathetic, and the style was evenly melodious without one single attempt at rhetoric, without one phrase or one passage that could be called pretentious. The book sold with enormous rapidity, and edition followed edition in rapid succession. Great as was its success in Europe, it had a success still greater in America. Rival publishers brought out rival editions, and the present writer never remembers to have gone on any journey in America without seeing a copy of the "History of Our Own Times" in the hands of several of the passengers. But the hapless author gained little from this enormous American sale, for as yet there was no copyright between England and America. His old publishers, the Messrs. Harper and Brothers, with that fair dealing which characterizes all their transactions, did send him voluntarily an occasional instalment of a hundred pounds or so, but they at the same time told him that if there had been an international copyright they could have well afforded to have given him £10,000 for his rights.

Little has been said of Mr. McCarthy's modern political career. He is one of the men who does not owe Mr. Parnell anything; as the Irish leader would himself have been the first to acknowledge; but Mr. McCarthy soon saw that in Mr. Parnell there was the real chief of that honest and independent Parliamentary Party for which, like so many of the old '48 men, he had been looking upwards of thirty years; to Mr. Parnell, then, he unreservedly gave his confidence and his support. Sagacious, tranquil, and experienced, he was thrown into a prominent position at an epoch of fierce and tempestuous passions; but nobody was readier to see, when the time came, the necessity for strong action. He has been ready on every emergency to take his share of the unspeakable drudgery to which Irish members have been subjected; and it imposed a greater sacrifice on him than on any other member of the Irish party to face the odium and the loss of personal and professional prestige which a part in these unpopular labors involved. If the delivery of Mr. McCarthy were equal to his intellectual and rhetorical powers, he would be amongst the foremost speakers of the House. He is ready; he has eminently clearness of head and calmness of temper; and his ideas clothed themselves in language of beauty, smoothness, and appropriateness with an unerring regularity which belonged to



but two other speakers in the House—Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Sexton. He has in more than one debate delivered the best speech in point of matter and of form. His was the best speech in the strange debate which occurred under Mr. O'Donnell's suspension for his attacks on M. Clallamel-Lacour, and his was the most effective of the many effective replies given to Mr. Forster's historic attack on Mr. Parnell. Mr. McCarthy in one style of speech was far and away superior to any of his party, and probably to any man in the House—that is, as an after-dinner speaker. He bubbled over with wit of the most delicate and playful kind, and could keep the table in a roar. Finally, let this sketch of Mr. McCarthy's be closed with the mention of the saddest and darkest pages of his life. Just as his long struggle was crowned with success, and as he became from the poor and obscure reporter the popular novelist, the successful historian and the Member of Parliament, the woman without whom he would have remained, in all probability poor and obscure to the end, was seized with a lingering illness and died. It would be unbecoming to even attempt a description of what his loss meant to Mr. McCarthy. Few can paint a character completely, and it is acquaintance only with Mr. McCarthy that can make intelligible the peculiarly strong hold he had over the affections and admiration of his intimates. It is not often that there are found united in the same man modesty and literary genius, a toleration of others with a power of absolute self-abnegation, a sane enjoyment of every hour, with the courage of calmly facing, for the sake of the right cause, fortunes worst blows, Destiny's most cruel decree. Moderate in advice, when the fortunes of his country are at stake, he was always boldest when acts involved only personal risks to himself. It was this curious mixture of tenderness, shyness, and almost feminine romanticism with a thoroughly masculine and fearless spirit that made him so beloved. There is something incomplete, says the French epigram, in the noble life that does not end on the scaffold, in the prison, or on the battlefield. May Justin McCarthy have many and prosperous days, and a tranquil and honorable end! But it is almost a pity that he cannot be hanged for high treason, to show how calmly a quiet man could die for Ireland.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### THOMAS SEXTON, IRELAND'S SILVER-TONGUED ORATOR.

In the debates of the meeting at the City Hall Mr. Thomas Sexton broke silence for only a few minutes. Nobody could help remarking that his voice was peculiarly melodious, but few had any conception of the great things that were in this thin, delicate, rather retiring man.

Thomas Sexton was born in Waterford in 1848. He had not yet reached his thirteenth birthday when he entered a competition for a clerkship in the Secretary's office of the Waterford and Limerick Company. The post was naturally unimportant; the salary, of course, small, but that did not prevent thirty youths entering the lists. Of these Sexton was the youngest, but he obtained the first place. He remained in the Secretary's office till he was between twenty and twenty-one years of age, when, as will be seen, he left his native town, drawn to Dublin, like most young men of ability and enterprise. The influence of his many years of dry toil in an office is visible in Sexton to-day. It has often been remarked that he has what is considered an un-Irish talent of dealing readily, clearly, and accurately with figures. This is no new talent. When he was in the railway office in Waterford his friends used to amuse themselves by giving him a long sum in compound addition, which most people would find it hard to calculate rapidly even with the aid of pen and ink. Sexton would close his eyes, and in a few minutes would give the answer with invariable accuracy. He used to say that the figures were "written on his brain." Sir George Trevelyan once brought in a bill to increase official pay, and, speaking within a few minutes after the Chief's Secretary had concluded, Sexton was able to tell almost to a penny what the sum total meant to each individual, and was complimented by Sir George on his accuracy. But Sexton had another life besides that of the railway official. In his boyhood days there was still a good deal of literary and social activity in the Irish provincial towns. The Mechanics' Institute and the Catholic Young Men's Society were both flourishing institutions in Waterford, and Sexton soon became the

most prominent figure in both. He established a debating society, lectured when he was but sixteen on Oliver Goldsmith and John Bunyan, and on one occasion did duel in the Town Law with a delegation from the Portland Debating Society—a neighboring rival—on the still vexed question of emigration. It speaks well for their instinctive appreciation of genius that the people of Waterford did not allow Sexton to leave their town, though he was but twenty-one years of age, altogether unnoticed. A public dinner was held in his honor and he received addresses from the societies in which he had figured so largely.

This was the end of Sexton as a public speaker for a long series of years. In Dublin, where he arrived in 1869, he at once became leader writer on the *Nation*, then, as so long before, the most outspoken advocate of the Nationalist principles. Sexton also in time became editor of the *Weekly News* and of *Young Ireland*, two publications also issued from the *Nation* office. Immersed in these things, and of the temperament shy and easy-going, Sexton never sought or even accepted any opportunity of displaying his oratorical powers. He took his share in all the National movements, but it was as a silent and unknown member of those committees which do the practical work and leave the speechmaking to others. Probably there was not one even of his intimates who suspected that this retiring litterateur, fond of his cigar, of pleasant company, and of prolonged vigils, would ever have the courage to face an audience larger than the petit comite which his wit—sly, delicate, slightly cynic—used to delight. But in 1879, the year of the Land League and of revolutionary upheaval, Sexton was brought at last, and almost in spite of himself, into the stormy arena of public life. In 1879 he was sent by the council of the Land League to address a meeting in Dromore West, County Sligo. To the credit of the people there, be it said that his speech made a profound impression, and that his great gifts received immediate recognition. But Dublin still did not know him; and when the general election came he went very near being excluded from the ranks of the new Parliamentarians. He was proposed for his native county, but he was withdrawn; and when he was sent to Sligo he had to overcome many difficulties, and even friends, though an attack by so young and so obscure a man on a great magnate like Colonel King-Harman was a

hopeless enterprise. But Sexton stumped the county, roused enthusiasm everywhere, and drove Colonel King-Harman from the seat in Parliament. Sexton again showed no anxiety to push himself prematurely forward. During his first session of Parliament he remained, comparatively speaking, unnoticed. He was phenomenally constant in attendance, and he was in the habit of putting what, in these early days of the new Irish Party, was considered a very large number of questions. But nobody yet had any idea that there was anything in him above very earnest and very respectable mediocrity, nor during the recess which followed did he advance his position to any appreciable degree. He was certainly one of the most constant among the speakers of the Land League meetings throughout the country; but this fact, while it procured him the notice of the Government, so far that he was included in the famous trial of the traversers, did not have any perceptible effect upon his own political fortunes. It was on an evening when Mr. Forster's Coercion Bill was under discussion that Sexton broke upon the House for the first time as a great orator. The House was, when he rose, but ill-prepared, indeed, for a patient acceptance of any speech from an Irish Member, for, of the subjects, it was already sick to death; and the final outcome was as predestined as the procession of the earth through the regions of the air. The physical circumstances of the moment tended to increase the prevalent depression, for it was a dull, dark, dismal evening. The House was, therefore, listless, somber and but thinly filled when Sexton rose. He spoke for two hours, not amid the enthusiastic plaudits which greet a powerful exponent of a great party's principles, but amid chilling silence, interrupted occasionally by the thin cheers of the small group of Irishmen around him—and yet when he sat down the whole House instinctively felt that a great orator had appeared among them. In the London newspapers the speech was reported in but a few lines. But Members talked of it in the lobby and the smoke-room; Sir Stafford Northcote was reported to have praised it highly, and, among members of the house of Commons, at least, Sexton's reputation was established. In the councils of his party the voice of Sexton has always been for good sense. Sagacity is, indeed, the very soul of his oratory. To think of him merely as the eloquent speaker is to forget that still greater claim to respect he holds

as a man of remarkably well balanced mind, of keen and almost faultless judgment. To describe the characteristics of Sexton's oratory is a task of extreme difficulty. He can marshal facts; he can discuss figures with the driest statistician, and can balance argument with the most logic-chopping member of the House, and he can, at the same time, invest every subject with the glory of splendid language. For the rest, Sexton is a keen observer, and his reading of men's motives is helped by a slight dash of cynicism. In ordinary affairs blase and physically lethargic, his political industry is marvellous. He enters the House of Commons when the speaker takes the chair and never leaves it until the door-keeper's cry of "Who goes home?" is heard. He sits in his place during all those long hours, grudging the time he spends at a hasty dinner—practically the one meal he takes in the day—or the minutes he gives to the smoking of the dearly loved cigar. Before he goes down to the House he has mastered all the business of the day, and his breakfast is of Blue Books. Orderly in many of his habits, he rarely approaches the discussion of any question without full knowledge of all the facts carefully arranged and abundantly illustrated by letters or other documents. He has great mastery of detail. Probably he was the only one, except Sir Charles Dilke, who knew all the figures connected with the Redistribution Bill. With every measure that in the least degree concerns Ireland he is acquainted down to the last clause, and thus it is that he enters on all debates with a singularly complete equipment. Finally, his mind is extraordinarily alert. His opponent has scarcely sat down when he is on his feet with counter-arguments to meet even the plausible case that has been made against him. It seems impossible to take him unawares, and words come without hesitation to express every shade of meaning. This gift, aided by sangfroid, makes him a most formidable opponent, and even the speaker, backed by all the new rules of the House and his own large and generous interpretation of his powers, has had more than once to succumb before the ready answer and cool temper of Mr. Sexton.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE ROMANTIC HISTORY OF ARTHUR O'CONNOR.

Not one man in a thousand would have ever guessed when he heard Mr Arthur O'Connor addressing the House of Commons that he had a drop of Irish blood in his veins. The whole air of the member for Queens County is rigid, serious, icy. He drops his words with calculated slowness, and the subjects he selects for treatment are dry and formal and statistical; the subjects, in short, which are supposed to attract the plodding mind of the typical Englishman.

The physique of Arthur O'Connor, too, suggests the same idea of a calmness and unemotional self-control which an Irishman is rarely supposed to possess; he is tall, thin, with a sombre air and a cold, dark-blue eye. But to those who have learned to know him all these outward presentments are but a mask; in the whole of the Irish Party—with all its fierce and strange spirits—there is not one whose heart beats with emotion so profound, with a hatred so fierce, a holy rage so lethal. The keen analysis of the French mind has divided enthusiasm into two kinds—the enthusiasm that is warm and the enthusiasm that is cold. The enthusiasm of Arthur O'Connor is of the cold, that is, of the perilous, type.

Arthur O'Connor was born in London on October 1st, 1844. His father was a County Kerry man, and was for many years one of the most eminent physicians, and at the same time one of the best-known figures in the social life of London. Arthur was educated at Ushaw, and in the year 1863 began life for himself by competing for a clerkship in the War Office. There was but one vacancy, and there were thirty competitors; O'Connor got the place, obtaining a higher average of marks than any Civil Service competitor for many years. For the space of sixteen years the young Irishman led the dull, sombre, monotonous life of the Civil Servant in the gloomy building in Pall Mall. He was a model clerk in being always accurate, attentive, hardworking; there never was, and there never could be, a charge of a single act of neglect of duty, or stupidity, during the entire period. But outside his office Arthur O'Connor was the most unclerklike of men. He



had political opinions, and political opinions of the most unpopular, the most unfashionable, above all the most unprofitable, character. An effusive and unmeaning address to some monarchical personage was once being hawked around the War Office; it came in the end to Arthur O'Connor's desk. "If you don't take that away," said O'Connor to the gentleman who was collecting signatures, "before I count twenty I will put it into the fire." Then he not only professed Irish National principles, but he joined an Irish organization, and in time became one of its rulers; for he was elected a member of the executive of the Home Rule Confederation.

Finally he began to be seen in the lobby in the House of Commons in earnest and frequent colloquy with Mr. Parnell, and the whisper went abroad that the statistical clerk was priming the Irish agitator with obstructive powder and shot. In this connection it may be just as well to make the passing observation that O'Connor never on a single occasion told Mr. Parnell even one word in reference to matters which official honor called upon him to keep private. Arthur O'Connor was by no means anxious to remain in his dingy rooms in Pall Mall. Under a scheme of reorganization an offer was made to him, as well as to other clerks, to retire if he chose. He did so choose, and shook the dust of the War Office from his feet.

He had already given a taste of his quality as a political gladiator in minor theatres, and the poor-law guardian in his case was veritably the father of the member of Parliament. In 1879 he was elected member of the Chelsea Board of Guardians, and the main purpose which he and his friends had in getting this place was that he might look after Catholic interests. These interests did, indeed, stand in need of some advocate. For six months not one of the Catholic inmates of the workhouse had been allowed to go out to Mass, either on a Sunday or on a holiday; nor was a Catholic priest permitted to enter the place; no Catholic prayer-books were given to be read, and the Catholic children were sent to Protestant schools; and, finally, the institution was not stained by having a single "Romanist"—as the phrase went in the vocabulary of the Board—among its officials. On the very first day on which O'Connor took his seat the most eligible of all the applicants for the humble position of "scrubber" was rejected on the sole ground that he was a Catholic. This was

the large and complete penal code which the new member set out to destroy, and the task seemed certainly audacious and desperate enough. The Board consisted of twenty members. O'Connor was the single Catholic in the whole number—it was one man against nineteen. O'Connor started on his enterprise in a characteristic fashion. He was not aggressive in manner, nor violent in language; he made no speeches, either strong or long, nor did he, on the other hand, intrigue, or smile, or coax. He relied on two weapons alone—the weapons of knowledge and of hard work. He first mastered the whole complicated system of the poor-law code; after a while he had become such an expert in the law of the workhouse, and was withal so calm and so composed that his fellow-guardians abandoned any attempt to trip him up.

But this was only a small part of O'Connor's work. He had been elected a member of the General Purposes Committee—this was when he was still an unknown quantity to his fellow-guardians—and the General Purposes was the committee which had the contracts to give and to examine, which dealt with accounts and other matters of high import in the economy of the workhouse. O'Connor devoted days and weeks to the study of all these accounts, with the result that he knew every item as intimately as if he had to pay it out of his own pocket. This was of all forms of knowledge the one which made O'Connor most formidable. It became impossible for a penny to pass muster for which full and satisfactory explanation was not given; jobbery trembled beneath the pitiless eye of this cold and calm inquisitor, and rogues fled abashed. All this could not be accomplished without terribly hard work. The meeting of the General Purposes Committee and of the Board was on the same day—Wednesday—and every Wednesday, as inevitable as night or death, O'Connor was in his place on the Committee and the Board; and though this work often extended continuously from ten o'clock in the morning till eight at night, with the exception of half an hour for lunch, in his place he remained all the time. The Board was shocked at this indecent scrupulousness, this shocking conscientiousness, this rude industry, and disappointed jobbers began to ask how it was that a man could at the same time perform efficiently the duties of a Civil Servant and a poor-law guardian. "How," asked a guardian, "could Mr. O'Connor attend every Wednesday, without

exception, from ten to eight, without neglecting his official duties for at least one day in the week?" This guardian resolved to have the matter out, and proposed a resolution calling the attention of the Secretary for War to the conduct of the War Office clerk. The gentleman's disgust may be imagined when Mr. O'Connor himself stood up to second the resolution; and so had it laughed out of court. O'Connor had nothing to fear from any investigation by the War Secretary, or anybody else, for he had not neglected his official duties; he had not lost one single day, and the manner in which he carried out this programme will indicate the kind of a man he is. In the War Office, as in the other Civil Service departments, each clerk is entitled to a month's vacation, and this vacation he is generally allowed to take at such times as he may wish. He may take it in a continuous month, or in a week now and a week again, or even by days if he likes. Now, the year of the War Office began in January; that of the Board of Guardians some months subsequently; the poor-law, therefore, overlapped the year of the War Office. Thus O'Connor was able to take the War Office vacation of two years within the single year of the Board; and his two years' vacation were the Wednesdays which he spent at the Board of Guardians. The men are not many who would seek recreation, rest, enjoyment in ten hours' work every Wednesday of every week, and in work without pay, without glory, and entirely for the benefit of the poorest and lowliest of mankind. Never was reformer so completely and so rapidly successful. He was but one year a member of the Board of Guardians—the combined forces of bigotry and jobbery took care that he should not be elected a second time. As has been said, he was one Catholic against nineteen Protestants, most of them bigoted Protestants, too, and at the end of that year every Catholic could go to church on Sunday or holiday; the Catholic priest was admitted to the workhouse once a week to instruct the inmates; the Catholic prayer-books were distributed in the same way as Protestants'; Catholic children were sent to Catholic schools; in short, of the vast multitude of Catholic grievances not one remained unredressed. And yet all this had been accomplished without a departure, perhaps, for one second on the part of O'Connor from his cold, calm delivery; without one violent word, with that exterior and

perfect and, on occasion, almost genial courtesy, under which lay concealed fierce passion and relentless purpose.

Arthur O'Connor's part in Parliament has been such as one might have anticipated from his previous career. He at once devoted himself to the work which was sorest and most uninviting; had acquired in a short time a knowledge so intimate of the rules of the House as to be a terror to all speakers, and was a more potent, more dangerous, a more detailed critic of the Estimates than Parnell or Biggar in their palmiest and most active days. It is curious to see O'Connor enter the House with a bundle of notes, which apparently must have consumed days in their preparation; to hear him put Mr. Courtney to shame as he describes the extravagant wages of a charwoman in the Foreign Office, and to bring confusion to the mind of the First Commissioner of Works as he dilates on the bad quality of the mortar in the last repairs of a Royal palace. All this is done with an air of unbroken severity, but, at the same time, of unruffled temper and of inflexible courtesy. O'Connor is the calm, patient, lofty spirit of economy that chides, but pities, and that speaks in the accents of sorrow rather than of anger. At some moments it is an explanation which O'Connor prays for with his inimitable air of sad deference. A small speech is required, of course, to preface the inquiry. The Minister having answered, a second speech is necessary in order to have a further word on just a trifling little difficulty that still remains to disturb O'Connor's mind. Then the Minister again explains, and O'Connor, now fully satisfied, has to express his gratitude and content; and the expression of his gratitude and content requires a third speech. And thus it goes on hour after hour—O'Connor, calm, differential, appallingly inquisitive, miraculously omniscient—the Minister restless, apologetic, divided between the desire to swear and the dread of its consequences—with the result that, when the night is over, the Treasury has got about one out of the fifteen votes it hoped to carry. Work of this kind, constantly done by such men as O'Connor and Biggar—and in former days by gallant Lysaght Finigan—is and can never be reported, is rarely even described, is rarely even heard of, but it is willingly, patiently, relentlessly, continuously going through the hideous drudgery of unrecognized toil like this that such men show the depths of their self-devotion, the reality and

earnestness of their self-forgetfulness. With the doubtful exception of Mr. Parnell, Arthur O'Connor has the most thoroughly and the best House-of-Commons style in the party. Clear, deliberate, passionless in language, gesture, delivery, he is the very best model of an official speaker. The narrow limits within which he confines himself do injustice to his powers. The only occasion on which he did prominently enter into general debate was on the Bradlaugh question, and his answer to Mr. Bright on that occasion suggested possibilities of sober but lofty eloquence.

Finally, the sternness of Mr. O'Connor's faith does not prevent him from being one of the kindest companions, one of the most tolerant and even-tempered counsellors; though he has much of the antique Roman, he has much also of the social charms of the modern Irishman.



Composed from the Book of Kells.



## CHAPTER XV.

INTERESTING ACCOUNT OF T. D. SULLIVAN, AUTHOR OF IRELAND'S  
NATIONAL ANTHEM, "GOD SAVE IRELAND."

Timothy Daniel Sullivan was born in 1827. The home of the Sullivans was thoroughly National, and amid the stirring times of 1848 and the hideous disasters of the two preceding years there were all the circumstances to make the national faith of the family bitter and robust. The father was carried away, like the majority of the earnest and energetic Irishmen of that time, by the Gospel which the young Ireland leaders were preaching with such fascination of voice and pen, became one of the leaders of the local '48 club, and, as a reward, was dismissed from his employment by one of the local magistrates. T. D. Sullivan, like the rest of his brothers, though brought up in a small and remote town, had an opportunity of receiving a good education in the best sense of the word, and the family was essentially literary as well as National in its tendencies. The Sullivans were closely associated with another Bantry household, which was destined by-and-by to give a prominent figure to the Irish history of the present day. The chief and best schoolmaster of the town was Mr. Healy, the grandfather of the two members of the present House of Commons of the same name. It was from Mr. Healy that Mr. Sullivan learned probably the most of what he knows. The ties between the two families were afterwards drawn still closer when T. D. Sullivan married Miss Kate Healy, the daughter of his teacher. Though A. M. Sullivan was younger than T. D., he was first to leave home and seek fortune abroad. After trying his hand as an artist, A. M. ultimately adopted journalism as a profession, and became connected with the *Dublin Nation*. T. D. meantime had also allowed his mind to run into dreams of a literary future, and had filled a whole volume with his compositions; but, with the secrecy which youth loves, he had not confided his transgression to anyone. Two or three of the pieces had appeared in the print, but it was not till he came to Dublin and began to write in the *Nation* that the poetical genius of T. D. Sullivan sought recognition. Into

the columns of that journal he began at once to pour the verses which he had hitherto so religiously kept secret, and from the first his songs attracted attention. From this time forward the name of T. D. Sullivan is inextricably associated with the Nation.

Though T. D. Sullivan has written love poems and tender elegies, his preference has always been for the muse that stirs and cheers. Many of his poems became popular immediately on their appearance, and spread over that vast world of the Irish race which now extends through so many of the nations of the earth. A well-known story with regard to the "Song from the Backwoods" will illustrate the influence of T. D. Sullivan's muse. Irishmen know that splendid little poem, with its bold opening, and its splendid refrain:

Deep in Canadian woods we've met,  
From one bright island flown;  
Great is the land we tread, but yet  
Our hearts are with our own  
And ere we leave this shanty small,  
While fades the autumn day,  
We'll toast old Ireland!  
Dear old Ireland!  
Ireland, boys, hurrah!

The song, which was published in the Nation in 1857, first became popular among the members of the Phœnix Society—who, it will be remembered, were at work in 1858—and was carried to America by Captain M. J. Downing, one of the association. It rapidly became popular, both among the Fenians, who were beginning to be organized, and among the Irish soldiers who were fighting in the American army. Every man of the Irish Brigade knew it, and it was often sung at the bivouac fire after a hard day's fighting. An extraordinary instance of its popularity was given by a writer, signing himself "Romeo," in the New York Irish People of March 9th, 1867. "On the night," he writes, "of the bloody battle of Fredericksburg the federal army lay sleepless and watchful on their arms, with spirits damped by the loss of so many gallant comrades. To cheer his brother-officer Captain Downing sang his favorite song. The chorus of the first stanza was taken up by his dashing regiment, next by the

brigade, next by the division, then by the entire line of the army for six miles along the river; and when the Captain ceased it was but to listen with indefinable feelings to the chant that came like an echo from the Confederate lines on the opposite shore of

“Dear Old Ireland,  
Brave Old Ireland,  
Ireland, boys, hurrah!”

The song “God Save Ireland” became popular with even greater rapidity. It was issued at an hour when all Ireland was stirred to intenser depths of anger and of sorrow than perhaps at any single moment in the last quarter of a century, and thus profound and immense feeling longed for a voice. When “God Save Ireland” was produced the people at once took it up, and so instantaneously that the author himself heard it sung and chorussed in a railway carriage on the very day after its publication in the Nation.

On several other occasions the pen of T. D. Sullivan has given popular expression to popular sentiment. It has been his invariable rule in composing these songs to make them “ballads” in true sense of the word—songs, that is to say, that expressed popular sentiment in the language of everyday life, that had good, catching rhymes, and that could be easily sung.

It will not be necessary to write at any length of the Parliamentary career of T. D. Sullivan. He was elected, as is known, along with Mr. H. J. Gill, for County Westmeath, at the general election of 1880; and, in spite of the absorbing nature of his journalistic duties, he has been one of the most active and one of the most attentive members of the party. He has been, perhaps, still more prominent on the platform, and it is at large Irish popular gatherings that his speech is most effective. He is Irish of the Irish, and expresses the deep and simple gospel of the people in language that goes home, and then his keen sense of humor enables him to supply that element of amusement which is always looked forward to with eagerness by the crowd. He often lights up his Parliamentary, like his conversational, efforts with bright flashes of wit. Speaking of special clauses in the Crimes Act for the protection of certain humble agents of the law

one night, he declared, "There's a divinity doth hedge a bailiff rough h'use him how we will." "Punctuality," he said once to a colleague who turned up at a meeting with characteristic lateness, "punctuality, in the opinion of the Irish Party, is the chief of time."

It is when the county meeting is over and T. D. Sullivan sits amid a genial crowd of sympathetic friends that his best—certainly his most attractive—talents are seen. Like all the Sullivan family, he has plenty of musical ability, and, like poor A. M., has a splendid voice. A song by T. D. Sullivan has never been really understood until it has been heard sung by T. D. himself. His voice—loud, clear, penetrating—easily leads the chorus, no matter how many voices join in, and he throws himself into the spirit of the thing with all his heart and soul. His singing of "Murty Hynes" is worth going many miles to hear.

Such has been the career of T. D. Sullivan—honorable, consistent and tranquil. He has to-day the same convictions which guided his pen when he wrote surreptitious verses; he has stood by these convictions through years of trial and failure; he is as fresh and as vigorous at pushing them forward at this hour, when his hairs are gray, as he was when he sailed in boyhood's auroral days over Bantry Bay. His verses have marked the epochs which they have helped to produce, have won the affection of millions of Irish hearts, and form one of the many potent chains of memory and love that bind the scattered children of the Celtic mother to their race and to their cradle-land.

## CHAPTER XVI.

JAMES O'KELLY, TRAVELLER, SOLDIER, WRITER AND PATRIOT.

James O'Kelly was born in Dublin in the year 1845. He made acquaintance at an early age with the passions which make the Irish patriot. Among his companions in the Irish metropolis were a number of young men who, even in the dark hours between '55 and '65, worked and hoped for the elevation of the country; and, on the other hand, he learned in a school in London, in which he spent a part of his boyhood, the scorn that belongs to the child of a conquered race. O'Kelly accordingly entered upon political work at an unusually precocious age, and certainly had not reached his legal majority when political aims had become the lode-star of his dreams. This was the dark period when the treason of Sadleir and Keogh had broken all faith in Parliamentary and Constitutional agitation; and when Youth—especially if it had the mental and physical robustness of O'Kelly—was not inclined to listen to statistical comparisons between the resources of England and Ireland. The “set” to which O'Kelly belonged were certainly arch-heretics against the orthodox creed of constitutionalism, and had made up their minds to set about the liberation of Ireland in quite a different kind of style. The companions with whom O'Kelly then mixed lived to try, and many of them to suffer for, their experiments. Many of them are dead. Some of them survive, and are to-day as active and as hopeful as if they had not passed through hideous suffering and abysmal disaster.

In 1863 O'Kelly was enrolled in the Foreign Legion in Paris, and was immediately called upon to enter into active service. The Arabs in the province of Oran were in rebellion, and here O'Kelly had an opportunity of learning all the wiles as well as all the dangers of Arabian warfare. The rebellion had scarcely been suppressed when the French army was called to another and very different scene of operations. Everybody remembers that when Maximilian was made Emperor of Mexico French forces were sent by the Emperor Napoleon to win for his nominee his new dominion, and O'Kelly's regiment was one of those which were detailed for



the service. In all the fighting which went on O'Kelly had his share. O'Kelly was made prisoner by the forces of General Canales in June, 1866. O'Kelly had now a period of restraint, discomfort, possibly of danger, to look forward to; but an attempt to escape, unless successful, meant death. O'Kelly decided to make a dash for liberty; his guards proved careless, and in the darkness of the night he evaded their vigilance and rushed out into the Unknown. For days he had to wander about in hourly peril of his life. At one time he took to the river, hoping to float down to the point where Mexican territory joined the United States. The inducement to attempt this mode of escape was his discovery by the banks of the river of what is called a "dugout," a rude boat made from a hollowed tree, and in this primitive craft he floated with the stream for a day. He had at last to come to land, owing to the attentions of some Mexicans on the shore. They proved, however, not unfriendly, and finally O'Kelly made his way into Texas. On American soil he was once more a free man, but that was the end of his blessings. He had not a cent; his clothes, after his many days of wandering, were ragged, and who looks so disreputable as the soldier in a travel-stained uniform? However, O'Kelly managed to "strike" a fellow-countryman, and was by him given a job. The job—historical accuracy is especially desirable in the biography of a soldier—was that of removing lumber. He managed finally to make his way to New York, and when he got there he was confronted with stirring news that led him for a while to the hope that the next time he went a-soldiering it would be for his own land.

The stories which were current in those days of the possibilities and the resources for rebellion in Ireland have been described long since by many pens, and have produced a bitterness of controversy that warns off any writer. Suffice it to say that O'Kelly did not find things as he expected, that he had seen too much of real warfare to have any faith in unarmed crowds, and that he was one of those who most fiercely opposed any attempt at insurrection. Everybody knows that these counsels did not then prevail, and that in 1867 there came some sporadic risings, with their sad sequel of wholesale arrests, imprisonments, and long terms of penal servitude. For years O'Kelly had to pass through the daily and nightly risks, the never-ceasing strain, the strange un-

derground life, of the revolutionary. O'Kelly passed through it all with calm courage and that cool-headedness which everybody recognizes, and, through determination, vigilance and prudence combined, succeeded in coming out unscathed. Again the French cause drew him into politics, and during the Franco-Prussian war he rejoined the French army; when Paris surrendered he once more left the French service. He then went to New York. Up to this time he had not seriously contemplated adopting journalism as a profession, and his efforts had been confined to occasional correspondence in the National weeklies. He applied for a situation on the New York Herald; and his application, like that of most beginners in all manners of life, was received coolly enough. At last, through the absence of all the regular employes of the journal on a special Sunday morning, O'Kelly got his opportunity. General Sheridan was to arrive from Europe that morning, and there was a general anxiety to know what the American Napoleon had to say about the military resources and the military strategy of the old world. The task of interviewing so distinguished a soldier was a highly honorable one, but it had one great drawback; General Sheridan was a man who was known to hold the "interviewer" in mortal hate. There was a whole host of reporters on board the steamer which went out to meet the General. The competition, therefore, was keen, with a keenness which nobody who has not been in America cannot completely understand. Each reporter, in his turn, tried his hand on the General, and each went back disappointed. At length O'Kelly made the attempt. He began his attack altogether out of the ordinary, mentioned places in France which the General, as well as he, had recently seen; gave a military estimate or two, and in this way conveyed the impression to the General that he was something of a kindred spirit, and knew what he was talking about. The General unbent, and O'Kelly, who was the "greenhorn," as newcomers are scornfully called, of the journalistic host, was the one who was able to give the best account of General Sheridan's views on his European tour.

O'Kelly, starting thus well, was gradually advanced, until he became one of the leader-writers—or "editors," as they are called in America—of the New York Herald. In 1873 there arose an opportunity of making or marring his fortune—an opportunity which O'Kelly gladly embraced, but

which ninety-nine out of every hundred men would have absolutely and unhesitatingly rejected. The rebellion in Cuba was going on, and it was a movement in which the people of the United States took a keen interest, these being the days when the annexation of Cuba was one of the political possibilities and aspirations of the hour. But what was the nature, and what were the methods of the rebels? These were points upon which no trustworthy information could by any possibility be obtained. The Spaniards had the ear of the world, and the story they told was that there was no such thing as a rebellion at all. If there had ever been anything of the kind it was entirely crushed, and Cespedes, its leader, was dead. What now remained was simply a few scores of scattered marauders, who were nothing but itinerant robbers and murderers. There was a strong conviction in the United States that these representations were not altogether to be relied on, and there were plenty of Cuban refugees and insurrectionary committees in the United States who circulated reports of quite a different character. It was said, for instance, that the Spanish troops were guilty of horrible cruelties—that they gave no quarter to men and foully abused women; and the rebellion, instead of being repressed, was represented as fiercer and more determined than ever. But how were these statements to be confirmed? The rebels, whether few or many, were hidden behind the impenetrable forests of the Mambi Land (as the country frequented by them was called) as completely as if they had ceased to exist. To reach these rebels, survey their forces—in short, attest their existence—was the duty which O’Kelly volunteered to perform.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### O'KELLY IN CUBA AND WITH THE SIOUX INDIANS.

He knew that when he set out for Cuba his task was difficult enough, but it was not until he arrived in Cuba that he realized to the full the meaning of his enterprise. He imagined that he might have been able to accompany the Spanish troops, then to pass through their lines to the rebels, and, investigations among the latter being completed, to return to the Spanish lines again. He therefore asked a safe conduct from the Captain General, but that functionary soon made it apparent that nothing would induce him to facilitate O'Kelly's task in any way, and he plainly told him that if he persisted in trying to get to the rebels he would do so at his own risk. O'Kelly soon realized the true meaning of these words. Throughout all Cuba there was a perfect reign of terror. Tribunals hastily tried even those suspected of treason, and within a few hours after his arrest the "suspect" was a rid-dled corpse. Any person, therefore, who was under the frown of the authorities was avoided as if he had the plague. Thus O'Kelly was invited to dinner in the heartiest manner by a descendant of an Irishman; but when this gentleman heard of O'Kelly's mission he begged him not to pay the visit, and promptly went to the Spanish authorities to explain the unlucky invitation. "It was not possible," writes O'Kelly in "The Mambi Land," the interesting volume in which he afterwards recounted his adventures—"it was not possible to turn back without dishonor, and, though it cost even life itself, I would have to visit the Cuban camp." "My word," he says in another place, "had been given to accomplish this, and at whatever cost it should be done," language that in the mouth of a man like O'Kelly really means to meet the worst that fortune could inflict.

He made various efforts to accompany expeditions of the Spanish troops which were supposed to be marching against the insurgents, but these expeditions either were postponed or, after they had been started, turned back without even coming in sight of the rebel lines. Then O'Kelly thought that his purpose might be carried out if he got into communica-

tion with some of the secret sympathizers with the rebellion who remained in the towns; but they, carrying their lives every hour in their hands, would not trust a stranger. At last he formed the desperate resolve to set out for the rebel lines alone, with the chance of being shot by the Spaniards as a rebel, by the rebels as a Spaniard, through a country which in parts was supposed to be overrun by robbers, quite ready to murder, with impartial ferocity, Spaniard or rebel; and into the midst of almost impenetrable forest, where the loss of the trail meant death. But he had not proceeded far on his way when he was placed under arrest by the Spanish authorities. Then came an order which made the situation still more hopeless; the order was that under no circumstances should O'Kelly be permitted to penetrate to the rebel lines, and the penalty was affixed in no obscure language. Brought before General Morales, one of the Spanish authorities, O'Kelly made the remark, "I should regret very much if one of these days you should be obliged to shoot me." "I would regret it very much also," was the reply of the Spaniard, "but if you are found in the insurgent lines or coming from them you will be treated as a spy or as one of the insurgents"—in other words, shot.

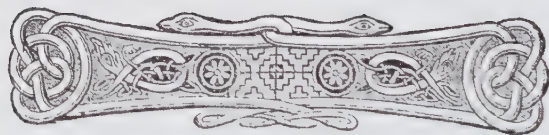
And still O'Kelly persevered. His plan was now to trust to the sympathizers with the rebellion; and at last he found a letter on the floor of his room in the hotel one night telling him that if he would proceed to a certain point alone on the following day he would be conducted to the rebel lines. O'Kelly, armed with a couple of revolvers, set out the next day, reached the trysting-place, and after hours of waiting in the blackness of the night, was conducted into the rebel lines, saw General Cespedes, President of the Republic, and spent a month in marching and countermarching, and in generally studying the resources, the customs and the prospects of the rebels. His task he had now succeeded in accomplishing, though every other person attempting it had failed. He had ascertained the existence and estimated the chance of the rebels, and the only thing now left for him was to return to America. Cespedes offered to send him home by Jamaica, but O'Kelly thought it necessary to go into the Spanish lines in order that there might be no possibility of a denial that he had actually entered the rebel camp. He had scarcely returned to the settlements of the Spaniards when he was



thrown into a dungeon in a fortress, where the stench was terrible, his only companion a forger; and he was convinced that the object of his captors was, if they could not shoot him, to kill him through scarlet fever. For weeks he was daily tortured while in this den by inquisitions and threats of immediate persecution, alternating with tempting offers of large bribes and immediate release if he would betray the men who had helped him to reach the Cuban lines. In time he was removed to another prison, bound with ropes as he was conveyed there. In this guise he reached Havana, and there again he was incarcerated in a cell—this time of such sickening odor that he had to fly continually to the grated door in the hope of breathing a little fresh air. It was evident that the Spanish authorities were thoroughly bent on inducing his death from yellow fever. He escaped all these perils, however, was sent to Spain, and then, through the united efforts of General Sickles, Senor Castelar, and Isaac Butt, was set at liberty.

Later on, in the war with Sitting Bull and the Sioux Indians, an expedition of considerable peril, O'Kelly remained throughout the business, until Sitting Bull was driven to take refuge in Canada. More recently O'Kelly conceived the bold idea of reaching the Mahdi. The continued obstacles which were placed in his way frustrated his object, but he did not abandon his purpose until he had adopted many expedients of characteristic daring and adroitness. The letters which he contributed to the *Daily News* excited much attention, and were the first to throw any light upon the character and strength of the movement of the Mahdi. With singular accuracy he pointed out the future of the movement, and some time later, in a series of articles in the *Freeman's Journal*, on the strategy of Lord Wolseley, he forecasted the perils and the final failure of the campaign with striking truth. He writes with the bold, slightly rugged, realistic pen of the special correspondent diverted to journalism from his true avocation as a soldier. Though he has given proof so abundant of a courage that dares all, O'Kelly's advice has always been on the side of well-calculated rather than rash courses; he has, in fact, the true soldier's instinct in favor of the adaptation of ways and means to ends, of mathematical severity in estimating the strength of the forces, for and of the forces against his own side. He is, like so many men, a bundle of con-

traditions. His whole temperament is revolutionary; he chafes under the restraints of Parliamentary life, and hates the weary contests of words; and, on the other hand, he insists on every step being measured, every move calculated. A friend jokingly described him once as the "Whig rebel." Again, his large experience of life and the ruggedness of his sense give to his thoughts the mode of almost cynic realism, and yet he is an idealist of the first water, for throughout his whole life he has held to the idea of his country's resurrection with a fanatical faith which no danger could terrify, no disaster depress, no labor fatigue. And it is a steady though silent laborer for the elevation of his people that O'Kelly would himself wish to be remembered. "My best work," he wrote to a friend, "was not the showy pages which have caught the general eye, but rather the quiet political work which I have done for the last twenty years. To the mere sabreur's part of my life I attach no importance whatever, except that within certain limits it has furnished me with the opportunity of observing men and acquainting myself with the motive forces which induce men to do or not to do."



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### JOHN DILLON AND HIS PATRIOTIC FAMILY.

Mr. Dillon, as so often happens, is the very opposite in appearance and manner from what the readers of his speeches, especially the hostile readers, would expect. He came in the course of time to be regarded by large sections of the English people as the embodiment of everything that was brutal and sanguinary in the Irish nature. He was accustomed during the fierce days of the Land League to the most violent denunciation, and he was daily in receipt of letters of menace or of insult. To those who know him this popular image was grotesquely inaccurate. Tall, thin, frail, his physique was that of a man who has periodically to seek flight from death in change of scene and of air. His face was long and narrow, the features singularly delicate and refined. Coal-black hair and large, dark tranquil eyes made up a face that immediately arrested attention, and that could never be forgotten. A stranger would guess that Mr. Dillon was an artist of the school that found delight in painting Madonnas, that spoke of the pursuit of art for art's sake alone, with a sublime unconcern for the struggles and aims and welfare of the workaday world. A tranquil voice and a gentle manner would further combat the idea that this was one of the protagonists in one of the fiercest struggles of modern days. The speeches of Mr. Dillon were violent in their conclusions only. The propositions which startled or shocked unsympathetic hearers were reached by him through calculations of apparently mathematical frigidity, and were delivered in an unimpassioned monotone.

John Dillon is the son of Mr. John Blake Dillon, one of the bravest and purest spirits in the Young Ireland movement. His father was one of those who opposed the rising to the last moment as imprudent and hopeless, and then was among the first to risk liberty and life when it was finally resolved upon. John was born in Blackrock, County Dublin, in the year 1851. He never went to a boarding-school, and probably he owes more of his education to home than to other influences. He was mainly instructed in the institutions con-

nected with the Catholic University, first in the University school in Harcourt street, Dublin, and afterwards in the University buildings in Stephen's Green. He was intended for the medical profession, passed through his course of lectures, and took the degree of Licentiate in the College of Surgeons. His entrance into political struggle was not precocious. It was not until after the arrival of John Mitchell in Ireland to fight the Tipperary struggle after his many years of exile that Dillon first appeared in the political arena. Mitchell had been one of the earliest companions of his father, and John Dillon was among those who went down to Queenstown to bid a welcome to Ireland to the returning and still unrepentant rebel. He then took an active part in the electoral contest, and helped to get Mitchell returned. The rise of Mr. Parnell and the active policy brought Mr. Dillon more prominently to the front. He was one of the first to appreciate correctly the new policy, and to see the road to salvation to which it pointed the way. At once he became an eager advocate of Mr. Parnell and his policy. This brought him into direct collision with Mr. Isaac Butt, and his was the fiercest and most damaging speech made against the old leader in the Molesworth Hall meeting, at which Butt made his last political speech. When the Land League movement was started Dillon at once threw himself into the agitation, and was appointed to accompany Mr. Parnell on his historic visit to America.

There were many other members at the meeting in the City Hall whose history would throw light upon the circumstances and tendencies of Irish life, social and political, but we have not space to give them more than a few passing words. Richard Power, who was elected in 1874, when he was barely of age, was a member of a Waterford family which has played a prominent and often a romantic part in Irish history for centuries. Richard Lalor, one of the members for Queen's County, represented a family ancient in Irish struggle. His father was one of the fierce spirits that led the movement against the tithes, and for many years was the foremost man in every political effort in Queen's County. James Finton Lalor, his brother, was perhaps the most truly revolutionary temperament of '48. He lives again in the pages of Duffy, and he it was who suggested to Mitchell the No Rent movement, which Mitchell is alleged to have spoiled, and

which for the first time was carried into effect more than a quarter of a century after Finton Lalor's fiery and restless spirit had passed to rest. Another brother, who sought a home in Australia, was the leader in a small insurrection at Ballarat, and there lost an arm. When the reforms he fought for were granted he became one of the rulers of the country, and afterwards Speaker of the Victorian Parliament. Richard was one of the same stern spirit as all of his stock. In 1848 he had his pike and his thousands of pikemen ready for action, and was until the last the unconquerable and irreclaimable rebel—the Blanqui of Irish politics.



Composed from Book of Kells.



## CHAPTER XIX.

THE O'GORMAN MAHON, GARRETT BYRNE, AND EDWARD DWYER GRAY.

The O'Gorman Mahon, to whom was entrusted the duty of proposing the name of Mr. Parnell as chairman of the Irish Party belonged to even an older agitation. Tall, erect as a pine, with huge masses of perfectly white hair and a leonine face, he was the majestic relic of a stormy and glorious youth. He was the last survivor of the once multitudinous race of the Irish gentleman, as ready with his pistol as with his tongue. Nobody could enumerate the number of times he was "out" and the still larger number of occasions in which he dispatched or received the cartel. A man of the spirit of The O'Gorman Mahon was necessary in such times as those of his youth. The Irish Catholic was still an unemancipated serf, and the Lords of Ascendency looked down upon him with the contempt of centuries of unbroken sway. It was at such a time that the swaggering adherent of English domination had to be met by a representative of the ancient faith and of the hidden longings of the oppressed majority, before whose eagle-eye privilege had to quail. O'Connell was the tongue, but The O'Gorman Mahon was the sword of the Irish Democracy rising against its oppressors after its centuries of bondage; and so he did his own useful work in his own day. There was something strangely picturesque in the appearance of that group of young men engaged in a still infant movement of a man who had stood by the side of O'Connell at the Clare election which won Catholic emancipation. It was almost as if Thomas Jefferson were to rise and with the same pen that had written the "Declaration of Independence" to join in the composition of Abraham Lincoln's proclamation against slavery. In the years that had passed since that day The O'Gorman Mahon had gone through a life of strange and varied adventure. When, in the whirligig of time, he was thrust upon Irish politics, he had gone to South America, and there had taken part in the struggles of the young Republics for emancipation. Returning to his native land, he found Isaac Butt starting the new movement for Home Rule. Several constituen-

cies competed for him, but he had chosen the historic county in whose history he had played so prominent a part.

Garrett Byrne, member for Wicklow, was in direct descent from Garrett Byrne, who was hanged in the rebellion of '48. John Barry, his colleague, beginning life at almost its humblest rung, had become an important member in a Scotch manufacturing firm, and shortly afterwards was in business for himself. He had also taken a share in political struggles, the history of which has yet to be told. Mr. Corbet was a member of an ancient Irish family, and a man himself of culture and of considerable literary power.

One more figure requires description. On the first day of the meeting of the Irish Party the chair was occupied by the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Mr. E. Dwyer Gray, M. P., for the County Carlow. Mr. Gray was the son of the late Sir John Gray, whose name has figured so frequently in the Constitutional struggle. He was born in the year 1846. Brought up from his earliest youth in the opinions of his father, whose favorite son he was, he attained at an early age a correct judgment of political affairs. His father had received many bitter lessons during a long political career. One story he was never tired of repeating to his son. It was of a man who offered to him during the Young Ireland excitement a plan of the defenses of Dublin Castle. Gray treated the offer of the surrender of the Lord Lieutenant's citadel with suspicion, and a few days afterwards was not surprised to find that the would-be traitor was a police-spy in disguise. The mind of the son was even clearer than that of his father, and refused steadily to accept any doctrine or course until it had been fully thought out. In this way Gray was sometimes regarded as backward when he was simply demanding the full reason for the offered policy, and had not yet been able to see its eventual outlet. He succeeded his father in the management of the *Freeman's Journal*, the chief newspaper of Ireland, and soon raised it to double its previous circulation. Becoming a member of the Dublin Corporation, of which his father had been the guiding star for many years, he soon attained to the position of its leading figure, and took a keen interest in advancing the hygienic improvements of the city.

At this period he was Lord Mayor, and had under his control vast sums which had been subscribed to the Mansion House for the relief of distress. Anticipating a little, Gray

subsequently came into fierce collision with James Carey, whom he exposed for an attempted fraud upon the Corporation; and Carey from that day was his bitter and relentless enemy. Gray had been returned to the House of Commons shortly after the death of his father, and was one of its most influential debaters. There was no man in the Irish Party, and few outside of it, who could state a case with such pellucid clearness. When Gray had completed his statement the whole facts were as clear to the minds of his hearers as they had already been to his own searching intellect.



Composed from the Book of Kells.

## CHAPTER XX.

### PARNELL ELECTED LEADER—GLADSTONE MEETS HIS MATCH.

The great question to be decided at this meeting was the future leadership of the party. Up to a few days before the meeting there was practically no intention even of proposing Mr. Parnell as a leader. The idea never assumed shape until the night before the meeting in the City Hall. There happened to be stopping at the Imperial Hotel several gentlemen who had been returned or had resolved to support Mr. Parnell's policy. Among them they discussed the question of leadership. The gentlemen who took part in this informal and accidental conference were Mr. John Barry, Mr. Richard Lalor, Mr. O'Kelly, Dr. Commins, Mr. Biggar, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, and, strangely enough, Mr. McCoan; Mr. Healy, who had not yet been elected a member of Parliament, was also present.

There was an understanding rather than a formal resolution among these gentlemen that they would propose Mr. Parnell as a leader. He himself did not come to Dublin until next morning; some gentlemen went to his hotel and others met him on his way to the City Hall. In his bedroom, and afterwards as he passed through the streets, mention was made to him of the suggestion that had been made at the informal meeting of the previous night. He neither rejected nor encouraged the idea, but seemed, on the whole, rather inclined to the notion, in case Mr. Shaw was displaced, of proposing that the office should be held by Mr. Justin McCarthy. This was the state of things when the meeting assembled. Finally the vote was: For Mr. Parnell, 23; for Mr. Shaw, 18. Mr. Shaw apparently received his defeat at the moment with good humor, but when, the next day, the party formulated its policy and declared in favor of Peasant Proprietary as the final solution of the land question, Mr. Shaw already indicated a certain difference from Mr. Parnell and his friends.

When the party came over to London the first occasion arose for the two sections taking opposite sides. It was on a seemingly trivial question. The point at issue was the part

of the House in which the Irish members should take their seats. In the view of Mr. Shaw and his friends the existing Ministry was so friendly to Ireland that the Irish party should signify their general adherence by sitting on the same side of the House. The supporters of Mr. Parnell maintained that even between a friendly Liberal Ministry and an Irish National Party there might arise irreconcilable difference on the Irish National question and on several others. They held that the only hope of a satisfactory solution of the Irish question was that Irish members should maintain a position of absolute independence of the English parties; that, therefore, the attitude of Irish Nationalists was one of permanent opposition to all English administrations, and that this political attitude should be signified by their continuing to keep their seats on the Opposition side of the House.

Meantime, in Ireland, the land question was reaching a crisis. The increase of evictions, which had begun in 1877, the first year of the distress, showed still further signs of increase; the number of tenantry unable to meet their rents was reaching daily larger proportions, and the Relief Committee had on their rolls something like 500,000 recipients of charity. Side by side with all this the Land League was daily advancing with gigantic strides, and every week was receiving a vast impetus through the immense subscriptions sent from America. It was clear that the time had come when Ireland must make a tremendous step either of advance or retrogression. Either distress was to develop into famine, and famine lead to wholesale eviction, and another lease of landlord power and oppression, or the Irish people were to throw off the chains of centuries, to revolt against the perpetuation of their miseries and of their servitude, and to dash forward in an effort for a new and a better era.

Such was the state of Ireland, and such the position of the Irish Party, when Parliament met in 1880. But how was it with the Ministry? They did not know the existence of the distress; they did not know the strength of the agitation; they were far more ignorant of the condition of the island than of countries separated by thousands of miles on land or by sea; above all things, they had no idea whatever of making an attempt to deal with the land question.

The first witness of the state of feeling among the Ministry is the Duke of Argyll, who, speaking in 1881, said:



"The present Government was formed with no expressed intention of bringing in another Irish Land Bill. . . . It formed no part of the programme upon which the Government was formed. Perhaps no Government was ever formed on a greater or wider programme, if we are to take the speeches of my right honorable friend the Prime Minister in the course of the Midlothian campaign as the programme of the Government; but, so far as I recollect and am concerned, it was not intimated in those speeches that it was the intention of the Government to unsettle the settlement of the Land Act of 1870."

In the session of 1880 the Marquis of Hartington showed that his mind was not only not made up in favor of Land Reform in Ireland, but that he was, on the whole, rather antagonistic to any such reform.

He was speaking in reply to a motion of Mr. Justin McCarthy that a tenant farmer should be added to the Commission of Inquiry into the land question. Several of the Irish members had spoken of the Land Act of 1870 as an absolute failure, and had taken it for granted that the Ministry had made up their minds that another and a larger Land Act was required. Thus Lord Hartington rebuked them.

"The Marquis of Hartington said he was not surprised that the honorable member for Tralee (The O'Donoghue) objected to the composition of the Commission, seeing that with him the failure of the Land Act was a foregone conclusion. To some minds the conclusion was not so absolutely certain that the Land Act had failed, or that it had not, and it was in solving that question that the Commission was expected to be useful. The speeches attacking the Commission had all been pervaded by a fallacious supposition, namely, that the Government looked to Baron Dowse and the other members of the Commission for a comprehensive scheme of land reform. . . . What they wanted was facts. In the last four years there had been almost continuous debates on the Irish land question. The result was that neither the House nor the Government could arrive at any certain conclusion on the matter. What could be more advisable under these circumstances than to ask a set of honest and impartial men to make inquiry on the spot, and to report the facts brought under their notice? That was the object of the Commission, and not as the honorable member for Longford (Mr. Justin Mc-

Carthy) seemed to suppose, the elaboration of a comprehensive scheme of land reform."

The chief and most significant testimony of the mind of the Ministry at this period is that given by Mr. Gladstone himself. During his visit to Midlothian in the Autumn of 1884 he said:

"I must say one word more upon, I might say, a still more important subject—that subject of Ireland. It did not enter into my address to you, for what reason I know not; but the Government that was then in power, rather, I think, kept back from Parliament, certainly were not forward to lay before Parliament what was going on in Ireland until the day of the Dissolution came, and the address of Lord Beaconsfield was published in undoubtedly very imposing terms. . . . I frankly admit that I had had much upon my hands connected with the doings of that Government in almost every quarter of the world, and I did not know—no one knew—the severity of the crisis that was already swelling upon the horizon, and that shortly after rushed upon us like a flood."

Such, then, was the condition of the problem presented to Mr. Parnell and his followers. In their own country thousands of people face to face with starvation; land tenure still in such a position that the tenant had no protection from rack-rent and from eviction, and therefore from periodic famine; an agitation rising daily in passion and in strength; the hour demanding revolutionary land reform; and the mind of even an honest Ministry either blank or hostile.

This contradiction between the demands of the Irish Question and the resolves of the Government is a central fact in all that follows. It will justify to any candid man measures which at the time appeared uncalled for and extreme; and, above all things, it will explain how it was that the Parnellites were driven at the very outset of the Session of 1880 into an attitude of hostility to a ministry that was Liberal and inclined to be friendly.

The Queen's speech was soon to give evidence of the unmistakable ignorance and unreadiness of the Government. It was of considerable length; it dealt with Turkey, and Afghanistan, and India, and South Africa; but it contained not one word about the Irish land question. Immediately after the reading of the Royal address the Irish members retired to the dingy rooms in King Street, Westminster, which

were then their offices. The omission of all mention of the Irish land question was pointed out with indignant surprise, and it was immediately resolved that the moment the House reassembled the Irish members should take action by at once giving notice of an amendment to the Queen's speech. The amendment to the Queen's speech in 1880 was the germ which afterwards was transformed into the Land Act of 1881.

The section led by Mr. Shaw had much to say in favor of the difficulties of the Government, and could urge with some justice that it was unfair to demand immediate treatment from the Ministry of a question of such vast importance and such extraordinary complexity as the Irish land question. The section led by Mr. Parnell, on the other hand, pointed out that the Irish land question had already reached a stage when further delay meant wholesale destruction; showed how long and patient had already been the endurance of the postponement of the land settlement by their constituents; and, above all, urged that the primary consideration of a National Party was the need of the Irish people, and not the fortunes of an English Ministry. If the Irish demand were allowed to occupy a second and subsidiary place; if that demand were made dependent upon the convenience of the Ministry, it was held by Mr. Parnell and his followers that the cause would be lost.

The amendment was brought forward on the reassembling of the House after the interval which follows the reading of the Queen's speech. It was in these words:

"And to humbly assure her Majesty that the important and pressing question of the occupiers and cultivators of the land in Ireland deserves the most serious and immediate attention of her Majesty's Government, with a view to the introduction of such legislation as will secure to these classes the legitimate fruits of their industry."

It was on the night when this amendment was brought forward that Mr. Parnell spoke for the first time in Parliament since he had reached his new position. He rose about eleven o'clock; the House was crowded and eager, and when the Speaker called out the name of the member for Cork there was a movement of keen interest, and in the galleries reserved for strangers almost everybody got up to have a look at the new Irish leader. Mr. Parnell spoke briefly, but with vehemence and force. He drew a rapid picture of the state

of things in Ireland, which was listened to with more curiosity than sympathy, and the general result was that Mr. Parnell was estimated as a very violent and rather irrational man, who represented nothing but a small and irresponsible knot of senseless irreconcilables. The attitude of the House to Mr. Shaw was very different. He himself seemed to challenge comparison with his successor, for the moment Mr. Parnell sat down Mr. Shaw rose. The first and most significant fact was that the two men spoke from different parts of the House. Mr. Parnell had risen from a seat below the gangway on the Opposition side. Mr. Shaw spoke from the very bosom of the Radical section, and when he rose he was rewarded with a burst of hearty cheers from all the Liberal benches. He spoke in the style that is now so well known; his speech gave a great deal of satisfaction and the opinion was freely expressed by the English members that his remarks were in welcome contrast to the heat and exaggeration of Mr. Parnell. The contest between the two men was held to be undecided. There was much contempt for the group of young men who formed Mr. Parnell's chief support, and the expectation was universal that Mr. Parnell's tenure of office would be brief and inglorious. The appearance of the two men in the debate strengthened this conviction in the English mind, and English members might be heard to comment with cheerfulness that Mr. Parnell might be a dashing guerillero, but Shaw was the sagacious statesman and the real leader.

But the Ministry and the House of Commons were soon to find that, however much Mr. Shaw's methods might be more agreeable than those of Mr. Parnell, it was with Mr. Parnell and his colleagues that they had to count. The new Ministers, confident in the magnificence of their recent victory, in the still verdant and unbroken strength of their party, and in the loftiness of their hopes, could not understand their path being crossed by this then insignificant section of the House. Between them and the Irish Party open warfare had not been declared, and its possibility would not be even contemplated, especially by men who had given such repeated assurances of their sympathy for Ireland as Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright. The Liberal Ministers and the followers of Mr. Parnell were at that stage in which it was yet undecided whether doubting affection would end in closer bonds or in



permanent estrangement; but, meantime, Mr. Parnell and his friends contemplated a second move. The great object at that time was to stay the hands of the landlord, made omnipotent over the tenantry by the failure of the crops; and to meet this emergency the Irish Party brought in the Suspension of Evictions Bill. The second reading of the Suspension of Evictions Bill came on at two o'clock one fine morning, to the horror and surprise of the Treasury bench. Mr. Gladstone looked up from the paper on which he was writing his nightly report of Parliamentary proceedings to the Queen, with a gaze first of pained amazement and then of pathetic appeal to the serried and resolute ranks opposite him. But the Irishmen, who had to think of hundreds of thousands of other faces that looked to their inner minds with hungry hope from cabin and field, had their advantage, were determined to hold fast, and declared that the discussion of the Bill must go on. The Premier yielded to the inevitable, made the important announcement that the Government themselves would consider the subject raised by Mr. Parnell's measure, and so the Irish Land Question, which but a few days before had been scouted out of court, which had never been mentioned at the first Cabinet Council, of whose existence the Queen's Speech knew absolutely nothing, had already within a couple of weeks after the meeting of Parliament been taken up by the Government as one of the chief and primary questions of the Session; and the starving tenants, just emerging from famine, might hope that the landlords would not be allowed to work unchecked their wicked will. This, in fact, was the first Parliamentary victory that the Land League gained.



## CHAPTER XXI.

### HOUSE OF COMMONS STRUGGLING WITH THE IRISH QUESTION.

The Disturbance Bill of Mr. Forster was the Suspension of Evictions Bill of Mr. Parnell under another name. The Parnellites, so far, had gained their point, but they were to reap still further advantage. The speakers for the Government had, of course, to array the terrible figures of eviction increasing with distress, to make strong speeches and urge powerful reasons in favor of a measure which went counter to so many of the prejudices of the House of Commons. Irish distress thus became the cry of an English as well as an Irish party, and striking statements and valuable admissions were made which justified the whole position of the Land League. For instance, it was during a debate on the Disturbance Bill that Mr. Gladstone committed himself to the famous doctrine that, in the circumstances of distress in which Ireland then was, a sentence of eviction might be regarded as equivalent to a sentence of death, and it was this and such like expressions of opinion that long paralyzed the hand of the Government against the Land League agitation. Everybody knows that the Disturbance Bill was fiercely opposed stage after stage by the Tories in the House of Commons, that it was finally carried by overwhelming majorities, and that, when it went to the House of Lords, it was thrown out with every circumstance of ignominy and contempt.

This ending to the business placed both the Government and the Irish Party in a strange and difficult position. It had been stated by Mr. Gladstone that a sentence of eviction was equivalent to a sentence of death, and the equally significant and appalling statement had been added by him that, according to the statistics supplied by the Irish authorities, 15,000 persons were to receive the sentence of eviction within that single year. The reality of the dangers of the peace of Ireland Mr. Forster was himself foremost in acknowledging; and were they then to allow Ireland to drift unhelmed—or, to use Mr. Gladstone's own words, "without hope and without remedy"—to the abyss of wholesale eviction, tempered by wholesale assassination, towards which the action of the

House of Lords had pushed it? It is hard at this moment to say what the Government could have done. They had just come from the country with a triumphant majority. Was it in political human nature that they should risk this majority by another appeal to the country within a few months, and before they had fulfilled a single item in the vast programme which they had set before them? The Ministry might have been greatly weakened, and the mighty weapon for the repair of past Conservative errors and for future Liberal conquest might have been returned to the hands of Mr Gladstone, pointless and broken. The truth is, the difficulty of the situation was the permanent and incurable difficulty of the present Parliamentary relations of England and Ireland; it was the difficulty of having to govern one country through the public opinion of another. An Irish Minister face to face with such a crisis could with confidence have appealed against a verdict so plainly hostile to the interests of Ireland as the rejection of the Suspension of Evictions Bill, with the full knowledge that the public opinion of his own people, at once sympathetic and informed, would have redoubled his power of meeting so protentious an emergency. But the English Minister had to appeal to a public almost entirely ignorant of the merits of the controversy, and fickle in its sympathies because of ignorance.

But there was one step which might have been taken, and which might have resulted in some good. On August 24th, Mr Forster made an important statement:

"He had always said they must carry out the law; but he must also repeat that, if they found, as they had not within the past two or three weeks found, and as they hoped they would not find, that the landlords of Ireland were to any great extent making use of their powers so as to force the Government to support them in the exercise of justice, the Government should accompany any request for special powers with a Bill which would prevent the Government from being obliged to support injustice. He would go further and say, under any circumstances if it was found that injustice and tyranny were largely committed—although he did not believe that such would be the case—it would then be their serious duty to consider what their action should be, and he did not think that any man in the House would expect him to remain any longer the instrument of that injustice."

Here was some promise of a break in the run of disaster which now menaced Ireland. The landlords might evict on a wholesale scale, and all their history down to that very year pointed to their making full and savage use of every power which the law and the seasons had placed in their hands; but if a Minister of the Crown, rather than carry on this law, were to resign his office, the public opinion of the country would necessarily be fixed upon the difficulties and the horrors of the problem; and the Ministry, with such a force behind them, would have been able to dictate to the House of Lords a prompt and complete remedy. But many days had not elapsed when this hope disappeared. A cold fit had supervened with extraordinary rapidity upon the outburst of angry and worthy resolve, and Mr Forster, catechised by the Opposition, explained his words until his great purpose vanished into thin air and meaningless talk. The final result of the Session then was this: A Relief of Distress Bill had been passed, through which money was to reach distressed tenants, having first passed through the hands of the landlords, and a Commission of Inquiry had been added to the long and dreary inquisitions that had investigated the Land Question.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### PARNELL URGES THE BOYCOTT—IMPORTANT UTTERANCES OF THE IRISH LEADER.

The situation which Mr. Parnell had now to consider was one of extreme difficulty. The composition of the Land Commission, the words of Lord Hartington, and the silence of the other Ministers, gave but too much reason to believe that the mind of the Government was not even yet made up for anything like a large measure of land reform. The refusal for so many years of any measure of relief, followed by the miserable insufficiency of the Land Act of 1870, were too much calculated to make Mr. Parnell draw pessimist conclusions from such facts. The great evil he had to avoid was that the mighty agitation of 1880 should not end, as did that of 1869-70, in an abortive and halting measure. Meantime there was the country before him, organizing itself, as it had rarely ever been organized before, with mightier forces making in the direction of complete reform than had ever, perhaps, stood behind any movement. The nature of Mr. Parnell impelled him to drive in political matters the hardest of hard bargains within his power; his grip of a political advantage for his countrymen was as relentless as the grip of death. His course in the months that followed was dictated mainly by the sense that through no word or act of his should the chance of the people for a full and final settlement of all their claims be jeopardized or diminished.

It is another essential evil of the present relations between England and Ireland that no great reform can be carried out—especially on the Land Question—without bringing the people of Ireland, as Mr. Chamberlain said, to a state bordering on revolution; and to a state bordering upon revolution the Irish people were now fast approaching. Mr. Parnell naturally gave no encouragement to the idea that the position of the Irish Land Question had not yet passed beyond the stage of inquiry. The movement in its new phase received its first word of real guidance from Mr. Parnell at a meeting held in Ennis on September 19th, 1880, and the speech he then delivered gave the keynote of the situation. First, he told the

people to place no confidence in the Government Commission; and, while he did not positively advise farmers against giving evidence, he warned them against the danger of the acceptance of any responsibility for the proceedings of that body. Then he passed on to the declaration which after events did so much to prove correct—that it was to themselves and their own organization the farmers were mainly to look for redress.

“Depend upon it (he said) that the measure of the Land Bill of next session will be the measure of your activity and energy this winter; it will be the measure not to pay unjust rents; it will be the measure of your determination to keep a firm grip of your homesteads; it will be the measure of your determination not to bid for farms from which others have been evicted, and to use strong force of public opinion to deter any unjust men amongst yourselves—and there are many such—from bidding for such farms. If you refuse to pay any unjust rents, if you refuse to take farms from which others have been evicted, the Land Question must be settled, and settled in a way that will be satisfactory to you. It depends, therefore, upon yourselves, and not upon any Commission or any Government. When you have made this question ripe for settlement, then, and not till then, will it be settled.”

And, finally, he gave the advice with regard to “boycotting” which was afterwards quoted hundreds of times against him.

“Now what are you to do (he said) to a tenant who bids for a farm from which another tenant has been evicted?

“Several voices: Shoot him!

“Mr. Parnell: I think I heard somebody say ‘Shoot him!’ I wish to point out to you a very much better way—a more christian and charitable way, which will give the lost man an opportunity of repenting. When a man takes a farm from which another has been unjustly evicted, you must show him on the roadside when you meet him; you must show him in the streets of the town; you must show him in the shop; you must show him in the fair-green and in the market place, and even in the place of worship, by leaving him alone; by putting him into a moral Coventry; by isolating him from the rest of his country as if he were the leper of old—you must show him your detestation of the crime he has committed ”

There have been few things that Mr. Parnell has said



throughout his career which have been more bitterly criticised than the counsel given in these words. Barristers have assailed him in the House of Commons who would have mercilessly boycotted the counsel that held direct intercourse with a client without the mediation of a solicitor; doctors who would mercilessly boycott a professional brother who advertised or compounded medicines, or violated any other article of a complex professional code, politicians who had mercilessly driven out of their organizations the backsliders from political principles; members of clubs who had ostracized offenders against the laws of honor or of conventionality; representatives of working classes who had wrung from a Conservative Ministry the right of workmen to boycott avaricious employers. The principles of boycotting have thus been applied in ordinary times, and in ordinary occupations, by some of those who most loudly denounced it. One of the most fertile sources of landlord wrong and tenant suffering was the fierce competition for the possession of land. It had induced tenants to offer a rent measured not by the capacities of the land, but by their own despair, and it is perfectly clear that as long as eviction produced, through this unchecked competition, an increase of rent, eviction was a temptation and not a horror to the landlord. At this moment the Irish tenants were engaged in a great effort to break, once and forever, the thralldom of centuries. Against this effort were arrayed the mighty forces of the Empire. By a strict combination alone among themselves could the Irish tenantry hope for success, and the boycotting of any man who lent, by land-grabbing, assistance to the landlord was essential to success. Boycotting was abused; it was occasionally used for private purposes; it sometimes led to crime; but it was at least a far less savage mode of warfare than assassination, which it largely replaced. Until coercion brought homicidal frenzy, it did much to keep down the number of outrages; and, as Mr. John Dillon said in reply to an attack, it kept the roofs over the heads of many a thousand men and women who, without it, would have been thrown on the roadside to perish.

The meeting at Ennis was followed by several other demonstrations, at most of which were the same array of numbers, which had been unparalleled since the days of the Liberator. At all of these meetings Mr. Parnell practically,

preached the same principles. It would be well worth while for anybody who wishes to study the strange career of this Irish Leader to read over again those speeches; for he will find in them that foresight, and that grasp of the central and essential facts of the situation and the real necessities of the time, which justify Mr. Parnell's extraordinary reputation. He had to fight at this period not merely the halting purpose of the Ministry, but also the feeble resolves of some men within the National ranks. They solemnly recommended moderation to the farmers, when the real danger was not in the extravagance of the demands made by the Irish people, but in the grudging bestowal of minimized concession by the House of Commons and the House of Lords. They amused themselves with elaborate schemes, instead of leaving the responsibility to the Ministers. They had much to say of the difficulties of Mr. Forster, and little of the difficulties of the peasants who, with their backs to the walls, fought a life-and-death struggle with hunger and eviction. Mr. Parnell, while personally courteous and tolerant to a degree that looked almost weakness, at this time, to these gentlemen and their proposals, steadily pursued his own path. He used to point out the objection to the "three F's" as either a practical or a final solution to the question. The settlement which he proposed was peasant Proprietary.

"We seek as Irish Nationalists (he said at New Ross on September 25, 1880) for a settlement of the Land Question which shall be permanent—which shall for ever put an end to the war of classes which unhappily has existed in this country . . . a war which supplies, in the words of the resolution, the strongest inducement to the Irish Landlords to uphold the system of English misrule which has placed these landlords in Ireland. And looking forward to the future of our country, we wish to avoid all elements of antagonism between classes. I am willing to have a struggle between classes in Ireland—a struggle that should be short, sharp, and decisive—once for all; but I am not willing that this struggle should be perpetuated at intervals, when these periodic revaluations of the holdings of the tenants would come under the system of what is called fixity of tenure at valued rents."

It is well to add that, in every one of the speeches in which he spoke of peasant proprietary, he definitely laid down the doctrine that peasant proprietary was to be obtained not by

violence, but by the payment of reasonable compensation to the landlords.

"Now, then, is the time for the Irish tenantry to show their determination—to show the Government of England that they will be satisfied with nothing less than the ownership of the land of Ireland. . . . And I see no difficulty in arriving at such a solution, and in arriving at it in this way: by the payment of a fair rent, and a fair and fixed rent not liable to recurrent and perhaps near periods of revision, but by the payment of a fair rent for the space of, say, thirty-five years, after which time there would be nothing further to pay, and in the meantime the tenant would have fixity of tenure."

One sentence, finally, from his speeches of this period Mr. Parnell's mode, means, and end were impulsively described once by Mr. Gladstone as passing through rapine to dismemberment. I have already quoted the sentence which will effectually dispose of the charge of rapine, and now for one on which the seeking of dismemberment was mainly founded. Speaking at Galway on October 24, 1880, Mr. Parnell said:

"I expressed my belief at the beginning of last session that the present Chief Secretary, who was then all smiles and promises, should not have proceeded very far in the duties of his office before he would have found that he had undertaken an impossible task to govern Ireland, and that the only way to govern Ireland is to allow her to govern herself. . . . And if they prosecute the leaders of this movement . . . it is not because they wish to preserve the lives of one or two Landlords . . . but it will be because they see that behind this movement lies a more dangerous movement to their hold over Ireland; because they know that if they fail in upholding landlordism here—and they will fail—they have no chance of maintaining it over Ireland; it will be because they know that if they fail in upholding landlordism in Ireland, their power to misrule Ireland will go too. I wish to see the tenant farmers prosperous; but large and important as is the class of tenant farmers, constituting as they do, with their wives and families, the majority of the people of this country, I would not have taken off my coat and gone to this work if I had not known that we were laying the foundation in this movement for the regeneration of our legislative independence."

This sentence, which was often quoted, as it will be seen, simply demands the restoration of the Irish Parliament; and that is not dismemberment. It was almost enough to make an Irishman frenzied to hear this sentence of Mr. Parnell quoted over and over again as the sudden revelation of some new, diabolical, unheard of policy. Mr. Parnell announced himself a Home Ruler. Was there anything new, or diabolical, or unheard of in that? Mr. Butt was a Home Ruler, so were all his followers; Mr. Parnell himself had been elected as a Home Ruler five years before the Galway speech. To say that he could not have entered into the Land agitation if he did not believe that it would help towards Home Rule, was to make the not very unnatural declaration that the reform of the Land system would tend towards the restoration of an Irish Parliament.



Composed from the Book of Kells.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### BUCKSHOT FORSTER WANTS COERCION—IRISH LEADERS PLACED ON TRIAL.

In the meantime, while thus the movement in Ireland was reaching its springtide, how was it with the Chief Secretary? From this period forward Mr. Forster disappears from history as an advocate of reform and becomes the chief, the fiercest, and the main champion of coercion. As the days went on, instead of resignation, came symptoms of the most stringent resolution to carry out the unjust law to its bitterest end. Extra police were drafted into the counties of Mayo and Galway, thus raising the burden of taxation upon the two counties that had suffered the most bitterly and escaped the most narrowly from the bitterest horrors of famine. The Orange writers in the North of Ireland adopted their usual policy of representing as a vast conspiracy against Protestantism a movement the unsectarian character of which was universally acknowledged, and sought to prevent an alliance of Protestant and Catholic farmers against their common enemy by the characteristic effort to rouse the dying embers of religious hate. The landlord organs began to cry out for repression, and the London papers played their characteristic part of blackening events in Ireland and of exasperating the growing resentment between the two countries.

Towards the beginning of October the cry for coercion had swollen to a tempest, but for a moment it was laid by two remarkable speeches from Mr. Bright and Mr. Chamberlain.

"I saw," said Mr. Bright, "the statement the other day that about 100 of them (the Irish landlords), equal nearly to the number of the Irish members, had assembled in Dublin and discussed the state of things, and they had nothing but their old remedy—force, the English Government armed police, increased military assistance and protection, and it might be measures of restriction and coercion which they were anxious to urge upon the Government. The question for us to ask ourselves is, Is there any remedy for this state of things? Force is no remedy. There are times when it may be neces-



sary, and when its employment may be absolutely unavoidable, but for my part I should rather regard, and rather discuss, measures of relief as measures of remedy, than measures of force, whose influence is only temporary, and in the long run, I believe, is disastrous."

A conflict then arose within the Cabinet itself. I cannot pretend to tell the story of this internal struggle, and I can only repeat what was the gossip of the period. It was said that Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Charles Dilke, and Mr. Bright held out steadily and for a considerable time against the demand for coercion made by Mr. Forster. But Mr. Forster put forward this demand with daily increasing vehemence. For some days, according to the remark of the time, the Cabinet was within short distance of being broken up. The main argument before which the hesitations of the Ministry broke down was the enormous increase which Mr. Forster was able to show in the outrages in October and November. And the increase which appeared in the figures he laid before his colleagues was enormous indeed. By-and-by these figures will be examined and it will be seen what the merits of the case were upon which Mr. Forster based his demands. For the present, suffice it to say that Mr. Forster carried his point; the opponents of coercion resolved to remain in the Cabinet, and it was announced that the next session of Parliament would open with a proposal for the enactment of coercive legislation. Meantime a blow was made at the leaders of the movement. On November 2nd, 1880, an information was filed at the suit of the Right Hon Hugh Law, then the Attorney-General, against Mr. Parnell and four of his Parliamentary colleagues, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Sexton, Mr. John Dillon, and Mr. Biggar; and also against Mr. Patrick Egan, treasurer, and Mr. Brennan, secretary of the organization. In the indictment were also bundled several persons who held subordinate places in the organization, or were entirely unconnected with it.

There were nineteen counts in the indictment against the traversers. The main charges were: Conspiring to incite the tenants not to pay their rents; deterring tenants from buying land from which other tenants had been evicted; conspiring for the purpose of injuring the landlords; and forming combinations for the purpose of carrying out these unlawful ends. This, then, was the proceeding of the Government!

There is scarcely one of these charges which was not the glory instead of the shame of Mr. Parnell and his fellow-travellers. Mr. Parnell had found the people face to face with famine and groaning under the oppression of centuries. He had brought them to such assertion of their rights, to such potent combination, that, instead of being swept away, as in all previous crises, by wholesale hunger and plague and eviction, and thereafter reduced to deeper wretchedness and more hopeless slavery, not one man among them died from hunger or from disaster, and that, rising up from their misery and impotence, they gradually reached the position of practical omnipotence over their oppressors. The events and calamities which seemed to drive the tenantry back into the doom of hunger and of servitude had brought to them a new birth of political hope and power; and an hour of apparently darkest misery had been changed into the dawn of a new and better day. A man of any other nationality who had accomplished such things—if he had been an Italian or a Pole; still more, at this epoch, if he had been a Bulgarian or a Montenegrin—would have taken an imperishable place in the adoration of Englishmen; and his reward, being an Irishman, was that a Liberal Administration dragged him through the mire of a criminal court. The trial was opened by a startling episode. With their usual mistake in regarding things in Ireland as necessarily the same as in England, because called by the same names, the English public were and are accustomed to look upon an Irish judge as raised above the passions of political partisanship. They were strangely shocked in the course of the preliminary proceedings of the trial to read a judgment of the Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, in which the trial was to take place—a judgment in which the traversers were denounced with vehement passion. The times had been so changed since the elevation of a man like Judge Keogh to the Bench that the Lord Chief Justice found that even the English people could not stomach such conduct, and he retired at the opening of the trial.

The trial was one of the solemn mockeries of the time. It was known by the Crown that no impartial jury would convict the saviour of the action of treason to the nation; and after a trial extending over twenty days, the jury were discharged without agreeing to a verdict, ten, according to

universal rumor, being in favor of acquittal and two for conviction. Another event of importance occurred during this recess. Shortly after his arrival in America on his memorable mission, Mr. Parnell found the services of a secretary absolutely necessary. He had previously made the acquaintance of a young Irishman who at that period was secretary in a London house of business and the London correspondent of the Nation newspaper. The young man had made a strong impression upon the Irish leader, had gained his confidence, and had taken part with some others in many of the important consultations at critical moments. This was Mr. T. M. Healy. To Mr. Healy Mr. Parnell's thoughts turned when he found himself immersed in a hopeless sea of correspondence. He requested Mr. Healy's presence in America by telegraph. On the day he received this telegram Mr. Healy threw up his situation, and on that same evening he was on his way to the vessel which took him to America.



Composed from the Book of Kells.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE IRREPRESSIBLE: "TIM" HEALY—HIS EARLY STRUGGLES.

Timothy Michael Healy was born in Bantry, County Cork, in the year 1855. Bantry, as has been seen, is also the birth-place of the Sullivans, and here Healy had beheld all the scenes of quick decay which have been already described. He had peculiar opportunities, indeed, for becoming familiar with the awful horrors of the famine, for his father, at seventeen years of age, had been appointed clerk of the Union at Bantry, and his occupation brought him into contact with all the dread calamities of that terrible time. He has told his son that for the three famine years he never once saw a single smile. Outside the abbey in which the forefathers of Healy and the other men of Bantry are buried, are pits in which many hundreds of the victims of the famine found a coffinless grave; and Mr Healy will tell you, with a strange blaze in his eyes, that even to-day the Earl of Bantry, the lord of the soil, will not allow these few yards of land to be taken into the graveyard, preferring that they should be trodden by his cattle. Reared in scenes like these, it is no wonder that Healy, whose nature is vehement and excitable, should have grown up with a burning hatred of English rule in Ireland.

He went to school to the Christian Brothers at Fermoy, but fortune did not permit him to waste any unnecessary time in what are called the seats of learning, and at thirteen he had to set out on the difficult business of making a livelihood. It is characteristic of his nature that, though he has thus fewer opportunities than almost any other member of the House of Commons of obtaining education—except such as his father, an educated man, may have imparted to him as a child—he is really one of the best informed men in the place. He is intimately acquainted with not only English, but also with French and with German literature, and the "rude barbarism" of imagination of English journalists is keenly alive to the most delicate beauties of Alfred de Musset or Heinrich Heine, and could give his critics lessons in what constitutes literary merit and literary grace. Another of the

accomplishments which Mr. Healy taught himself was Pitman's shorthand; and shorthand in his case—as in that of Justin McCarthy and several other of his colleagues—was the sword with which he had in life's beginning to open the oyster of the world. At sixteen years of age he went to England and obtained a situation as a shorthand clerk in the office of the superintendent of the North-Eastern Railway at Newcastle. Newcastle-on-Tyne has a very large and a very sturdy Irish population, who take an active part in all political movements that are going on, and when Healy went there he found himself at once surrounded by countrymen who, if anything, held to the National faith more sturdily than their brethren at home. Probably he himself, if he were to trace the mental history of his political progress, would declare that in his case, as in that of so many other Irishmen, it was an English atmosphere that first gave form and intensity to his political convictions. At all events, the newcomer was not long at Newcastle when he was a persistent and an active participator in all the political strivings of his fellow-countrymen, and it speaks strongly of his force of character and their discrimination that, though yet but a stripling, he was chosen for several positions of authority. Newcastle is one of the few towns in England that can boast of having a society exclusively devoted to Irish purposes, and of the Irish Literary Institute Mr. Healy was for a considerable time the secretary. He was also, as far back as 1873, secretary to the local Home Rule Association. Of Mr. Healy's habits in Newcastle a characteristic account is given by one of his friends. He lodged in the house of an excellent Irish family—known to every Irish visitor in Newcastle—and in the family there was a Celtic abundance of children. It will relieve many friends of Mr. Healy to be informed that this man, before whom Ministers tremble, and even potent officials grow pale, is the delight and the darling of children, whose foibles, tastes, and pleasures he can minister to with the unteachable instinct of genius. The moment the young clerk put his foot inside his lodgings there came a shout of welcome from the young world upstairs; the next minute he was romping with them all, and, during the whole period of his stay within doors he was the gayest and the youngest in the house. But when the time came for starting into the outside world of Newcastle and of Englishmen, Healy at once



put on his suit of mail; his hat was tightened down upon his head, his face assumed a frown of a most forbidding aspect, and even his teeth were set. And so he went out to encounter the world of strangers among whom he lived.

In March, 1878, he removed to London. He is distantly related to Mr. John Barry, M. P. for Wexford, and at that period Mr. Barry was associated with a large Scotch floor-cloth factory. Mr. Healy was employed as a confidential clerk in this firm. He began at the same time to contribute a weekly letter to the *Nation* on Parliamentary proceedings, which had just begun to get lively. From this time forward his face accordingly became familiar in the lobby of the House of Commons. He had previously made the acquaintance of Mr. Parnell and the other prominent Irish figures of the last Parliament at Home Rule meetings and elsewhere; and his connection with the Sullivan family had made him more or less familiar with the "inside" of Irish political movements. He at once threw all his force on the side of the "active" section of the old Home Rule Party, and Mr. Parnell has several times remarked that it was to Mr. Healy's advocacy and explanation of his policy in the columns of the *Nation* that the active party owed much of its success in those early days when its objects and tactics were misunderstood and actively misrepresented. The London correspondence of Mr. Healy was indeed a rare journalistic treat. In the opinion of many his pen is even more effective than his tongue; mordant, happy illustration, trenchant argument—all this was to be found in those London letters, and is still, happily, at the service of Irish national journalism. The style of Mr. Healy is founded palpably on that of John Mitchel, and he has many of the excellences, and a few also of the faults, of that writer; but these very faults only make him the more readable, for liveliness, after all, is the first attraction of journalistic prose.

Anticipating a little, Mr. Healy had scarcely taken his place in the House when he set to work, and his first speech was in reply to the Marquis of Hartington. It was late at night when the young member rose; the deputy leader of the Ministerialists had made an effective address, and most of Mr. Healy's friends felt rather anxious as to the result. Mr. Healy can now bear to be told that there were very divided opinions as to the merits of his first appearance. His speech was delivered in a hard, dogged style, and gave evi-

dence rather of fierce conviction than of debating power. It was some time, indeed, before the House would acknowledge that there was anything in Mr. Healy; and there has scarcely ever been an Irish member who had in his early days to face the fire of such brutal, mean, and cowardly attack. Gentlemen of the press professed to be shocked at the intelligence that the new member was poor—that he actually, like themselves, wrote for a living; and even the cut of his clothes afforded proof of the ignobility of his character. But Mr. Healy took no notice of all this ribaldry, except, perhaps, to become fiercer in his wrath and more persistent in his activity. In the nine weeks' struggle against coercion he was, though a novice, one of the three or four men who did the largest amount of talking, and one has to go to the records of Biggar's best days and Sexton's longest speech to find any approach to the performances of Healy. When at last the Coercion Bills were done with, in 1881, Mr. Healy found more profitable employment in discussing the details of the Land Bill. While ninety-nine out of every hundred members of Parliament were floundering in the mazes of that extraordinary measure, Mr. Healy had found the key of the labyrinth, and was perfectly familiar with its details. He worked, as is known, night and day at the bill, obtained several concessions, and finally succeeded, under circumstances to be presently described, in having the "Healy Clause" adopted. These various successes at last made the House begin to change its opinion of its latest recruit. It was observed that Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Law used to listen with the utmost attention to anything Mr. Healy had to say. The Premier was even one night beheld in pleasant converse with his young and unsparing antagonist, and at once the servile herd of Tory journalists began to recognize Mr. Healy's talents. The saying of the time is well known that but three men in the House of Commons knew the Land Bill—Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Law, and Mr. Healy.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF MR. HEALY.

A few words as to Mr. Healy's general characteristics. Perhaps the most remarkable of all his qualities is his restless industry. From the moment he crosses the tessellated floor of the lobby, at about four in the evening, till the House rises, he is literally never a moment at rest—excepting the half hour or so he spends at dinner in the restaurant within the House. He has almost as many correspondents as a Minister, and he tries to answer nearly every letter on the day of its receipt. Then he takes an interest in and knows all about everything that is going on, great or small, English, Scottish, or Irish. With eyes ablaze, he comes to tell you of some atrocious job that is perpetrated under sub-section B in the schedule to a Scotch Bill on Hypothec, or a Welsh measure on threshing-machines; and he points out the advantage to an Irish bill for reforming the grand jury by a block he has put against a bill for increasing the number of commissioners in bankruptcy. The extent of his knowledge of Parliamentary measures is astonishing; many utter opponents in public policy seek his aid in this regard, and—tell it not in Gath!—there have been occasions when he has been seen explaining in the Library the mysteries of legislation to Mr. Herbert Gladstone. Indeed, Healy held himself at the service of everybody. A puzzled colleague comes to ask for enlightenment; Healy has put his ideas into the shape of an amendment before he has had time to give them full expression. Besides all this, Healy has frequently to write a column or two for a newspaper in the course of the evening. And he is never absent from the House when anything of importance is going forward. He is, perhaps, the only man in the House, except Mr. Gladstone, who cannot bear a moment's idleness; and, like the late Premier, he is distinguished from other members by the fact that even in the division lobbies he is to be seen utilizing the precious moments by writing at one of the tables. The characteristics of his oratory are at this time familiar. Often, when he stands up first, he is tame, disjointed, and ineffective, but he is one of the men

who gather strength and fire as they go along, and before he has resumed his seat he has said some things that have set all the House laughing, and some that have put all the House into a rage. Finally, Healy has the defects of his qualities. The ardor of his temperament and the fierceness of his convictions often tempt him to exaggeration of language and of conduct. Those who play the complicated game of politics for such mighty stakes as a nation's fate and the destinies of millions ought to keep cool heads and steady hands. A quick temper and a sharp tongue cause many pangs to his friends, but keener tortures to Healy himself. He is betrayed into a rude expression, and then goes home and remains in sleepless contrition throughout the night. It was, of course, inevitable that when the Land League agitation broke out one of these antecedents and of this temperament should throw himself into the movement, and to those who now know Mr. Healy it will not be surprising to hear that he worked with fierce energy and often spoke with passionate vehemence. Passing through the South of Ireland, Mr. Healy became acquainted with the case of Michael McGrath. McGrath had held for years a farm, but, the rent having been raised from £48 to £105, had at last to yield in a struggle, and was evicted. His land was "grabbed" by another farmer named Cornelius—or, as he was called in the district, "Curley"—Mangan, and a decree of ejectment was given against McGrath for the house that had been built by his own hands or by those of his father. McGrath and his family did not tamely submit to the judgment of the law. They stood a siege for some days, and, when the evicting party approached near enough, threw boiling water upon them. The family were watched so closely that they were unable to go out even to get a drink of water, and at last were reduced by famine to capitulation. But the struggle was not over. McGrath went back to his farm and was sent to gaol. As each member of the family was released, he or she went back again, and again they were each in turn sent to gaol. At last they had to give up the struggle for the house, and they then adopted an expedient which, perhaps, could only be resorted to in Ireland, of all civilized lands. McGrath got a boat and turned it upside down, and under this boat lived himself, his wife, his sister, and his children. The many tourists who crowd in the summer season to the beautiful



regions of Glengariff were accustomed to stop on the road between Glengariff and Bantry to see this curious household. Mr. Healy was much struck with the story, and he and Mr. J. W. Walsh, then an organizer of the Land League, paid a visit to Mangan to remonstrate with him on the injustice he had done to the tenant, whose property he had helped the landlord to rob.

For his action in this matter Mr. Healy was arrested, and this was the first prominent arrest by the new Chief Secretary of the Liberal Government. Mr. Parnell and his friends at once resolved to make a return blow. The lamented death of Mr. William Redmond left a vacancy for the borough of Wexford. Mr. Healy was immediately nominated, and returned without even the mention of opposition. But he had not yet escaped from Mr. Forster's vengeance. He was charged under one of the Acts in the terrible code known as the Whiteboy Acts. The Acts date from the last century, and the prisoner convicted under them is liable to a lengthened term of penal servitude, and to be once, twice, or thrice publicly or privately whipped each year. The case came before Judge Fitzgerald, and he joined the prosecuting counsel in exhausting every effort to secure a conviction. The two persons, Mr. Healy and Mr. Walsh, were, in the first place, tried at the winter assizes, and this was in itself an unusual and suspicious occurrence. The winter assizes are intended for the relief of prisoners who, being imprisoned, would otherwise have to wait till the spring assizes, without having their cases decided; but Mr. Healy and Mr. Walsh were not imprisoned. They were put on bail, and this was, perhaps, the first instance in which bailed prisoners were tried at these assizes. The disadvantage to Mr. Healy and Mr. Walsh was that they were not tried by a jury of county farmers, many of whom might be in their favor, as their crime, if any, had been committed in the defence of the farmers' cause. Then they were tried as misdemeanants, which reduced their power of challenge to six names; and, throughout the trial, Judge Fitzgerald was a far more effective cross-examiner on behalf of the Crown than the prosecuting counsel. But in spite of all these efforts, Mr. Healy and Mr. Walsh were acquitted.

It is, perhaps, as well here to tell the fate of McGrath. He continued in his boat for some years—still pursued by the many agencies that are on the side of the landlords in



Ireland. For instance, he was charged by the county surveyor with trespassing on the road on which this boat-house was placed, and he only escaped through the inexhaustible ingenuity of Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. Healy's brother. But finally, through exposure to the weather, poor McGrath caught typhus-fever, passed through the illness under the boat, died under it, and was there waked. Since then neighbors have built a small house for his widow and children.



Sculpture on Window: Cathedral Church, Glendalough; Beranger, 1779.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

WILLIAM O'BRIEN, FOUNDER OF THE UNITED IRISH LEAGUE.

“ William O'Brien comes from a good stock, and was brought up from his earliest years in those principles of which he has become so prominent and so vigorous an advocate. On the day his elder brother was born, in 1848, the sub-inspector of police in Mallow had a warrant to search the house for firearms, but desisted from using it because of Mrs. O'Brien's illness, and on Mr. O'Brien giving his word that there were no arms in the house. O'Brien's father was one of the fiercest and most resolute spirits of the Young Ireland Party, but afterwards, like so many of the men who survived the terrible abortiveness of that time, was by no means friendly to physical force movement. In time he had to remonstrate with some of his own offspring for their adhesion to Fenianism, but his mouth was closed whenever his remonstrances became too vehement by an allusion to this episode in the days of his own haughty youth.

William was born on October 2nd, 1852, in Mallow, with which town his family on the mother's side has been connected from time immemorial. He received his education at Cloyne Diocesan College. This was a mixed school, attended by both Catholic and Protestant children. There was not the slightest sectarian animosity between the children of the different creeds, but there was plenty of political argument and differences. The Catholic Nationalists in the school formed a sort of small Irish party, and held their own; William O'Brien being successful in carrying off the cash prizes, while his brothers and others carried off the honors in cricket, football, and the like. William from his earliest years had the same principles as he professes to-day. Apart from the example of his father, he had in his brother a strong apostle of the epistle of national rights. To his brother, his senior by some years, he looked up with that mixture of affection and awe which an elder brother often inspires in a younger brother. This brother was indeed of a type to captivate the imagination of such a nature as that of his younger brother. He was a man of inflexible resolution, great daring and bound-

less enthusiasm. Among the revolutionaries of his district he was the chief figure, and there was no raid for arms too desperate, or no expedition too risky for his spirit. He took part with Captain Mackay, who was one of the boldest of the Fenian leaders, in many of the raids for arms on police barracks and other places in the County of Cork. He was arrested, of course, when the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and underwent the misery and tortures which, as has already been described, were inflicted on untried prisoners under the best of possible Constitutions and the freest of possible Governments. With this episode in the life of the elder brother, the brightness of the life of William O'Brien for many a long day ceased. His family history is strangely and terribly sad. In the O'Brien household there were at the one moment three members of the family dying. The father of the family had died before, and now two of his sons and his daughter were lying on their death-beds at the same time. The two brothers died on the one day, and a fortnight afterwards the sister died also. The shock to a nature so fiercely and intensely affectionate as that of William O'Brien can well be imagined. The death of his father and the illness of his brothers had thrown, to a great extent, the support of the entire family on his hands, and to them he was not merely a brother, but to a certain extent a helpful parent. It seemed for a time as if he were to be swept away by the same disease which had proved fatal to so many of his kin. He was only saved from death by a journey to Egypt, but he has never really recovered from the shock to his mind and heart which this family tragedy caused, and he is, and will be forever, haunted by its memory.

The first thing which William O'Brien ever wrote was a sketch of the trial of Captain Mackay. This attracted the attention of Alderman Nagle, the proprietor of the *Cork Daily Herald*, and he was offered an engagement upon that paper. There he remained until somewhere towards 1876, when he became a member of the reporting staff of the *Freeman's Journal*. He had become, meantime, and remains, an expert shorthand writer. He did the ordinary work of the reporter for several years, with occasional dashes into more congenial occupation in special descriptions of particular picturesque incidents. Whenever his work had any connection with the politics, condition, or prospects of his country

he devoted himself to it with a special fervor. It was his descriptions of the County of Mayo in the great distress of 1879 which first concentrated the attention of the Irish people on the calamity impending over the country. While he was working with an energy as great as that of any other journalist in Dublin at his own profession, his heart was in the cause of his people. When the Coercion Act was passed in 1880 he thought the moment had come for him to offer his services to maintain the fight in face of threats of danger, and he proposed, through Mr. Davitt and Mr. Egan, that he should take up some of the work of the League. His health, however, was at the time so weak that his friends feared that the imprisonment which was almost certain to follow employment by the League would prove fatal to his constitution, and he was dissuaded from joining the ranks of the movement. In June, 1881, when the conflict between Mr. Forster and the Land League was at its fiercest, the idea occurred of establishing a newspaper as an organ of the League and Parnellite Party. At once the thoughts of several people turned to the able and brilliant writer on the *Freeman's Journal*, and he was invited by Mr. Parnell to found *United Ireland* and to become its editor.

It was then for the first time that the higher powers of O'Brien were discovered. Great as was his reputation as a writer of nervous and picturesque English, he had hitherto been unknown as the author of editorial and purely political articles, and few were prepared for the political grasp and feverish and bewildering force of the editorials he contributed to the new journal. He had now been placed in the position for which his whole character and gifts especially fitted him. O'Brien is the very embodiment of the militant journalist. In some respects, indeed, his character resembles that of the French, rather than of the Irish, litterateur. Though he has keen literary instincts and a fine soul, his work is important to him mainly because of its political results. Fragile in frame and weak in health, he is yet, above all things, a combatant, ready and almost eager to meet danger. If he had been born in Paris he would probably have been found at the top of a barricade, or, like Armand Carrel, might have perished in a political duel. A long, thin face, deep-set and piercing eyes, flashing out from behind spectacles, sharp features and quick, feverish walk—the whole appear-

ance of the man speaks a restless, fierce and enthusiastic character.

The times were such as to bring out to the full all his qualities of mind and character. As has been said, the foundation of United Ireland came in the agony of the struggle against coercion. Its tone was a trumpet call to further and fiercer advance instead of an appeal to retreat, and naturally, before long, Mr. Forster knew that either United Ireland should be crushed or the spirit of revolt would grow daily fiercer and unbending. Mr. O'Brien was accordingly arrested the day after Parnell, under an act which was obtained for imprisoning mauvais sujets and village tyrants, the perpetrators and participators in crime! It was a part of the sadness that has followed his whole life that at the very moment of his arrest his mother was seriously ill, a woman whose nobility of character deserved the affection she received from her son. During his imprisonment the authorities were gracious enough to allow him out under escort to pay a visit to her, and he was released the day before her death. After various attempts to have the paper published in different places, sometimes in England and sometimes in France, United Ireland was finally suppressed by Mr. Forster. With the overthrow of Mr. Forster the paper was again revived. Then began a long and lonely duel between Mr. O'Brien and the Administration, which lasted with scarce an interruption for three of the fiercest years in Irish history.

While Mr. O'Brien was being tried for a "seditious libel" a vacancy arose in the representation of Mallow, through the promotion of Mr. Johnston, the Attorney-General, to a judgeship. It had been arranged before that whenever the general election came Mr. O'Brien, as a Mallow man, should appeal to the town to throw off its servitude to Whiggery and join the rest of the country in the new demand for the restoration of Irish rights. The opportunity for the appeal had come sooner than anybody had anticipated. The prosecution of O'Brien by the Government lent a singular opportuneness to the struggle, and a still further element of significance was added to the contest by the Government sending down Mr. Naish, their Attorney-General, as his opponent. Mallow, in some respects, has a history similar to that of Athlone, Sligo, and some other small constituencies



of Ireland. During the dreadful interregnum between the betrayal of Keogh and the rise of Butt it had followed the example of the other small constituencies in sending into Parliament the worthless representatives of Whiggery or Tories. The representatives of Mallow, like the representatives of Galway and Athlone, and of Sligo, and Carlow, bought that they might sell. The contest for Mallow, under circumstances like these, attracted an immense amount of attention, and all Ireland looked to the result with feverish eagerness. The reputation of Mallow had been so bad for so many years that there were doubts mixed with hope, and the utmost expectation was that Mr. O'Brien would be returned by a small majority. The full significance of the change that had come over all Ireland was shown when the result was announced and it was found that O'Brien had been returned by a majority of 72—161 to 89.



Sculpture on a Capital: Priest's House, Glendalough; Beranger, 1779.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers."

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### FIRST HOME RULE BILL—DESCRIPTION OF ITS INTRODUCTION INTO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY MR. GLADSTONE.

Prime Minister for the third time, Mr. Gladstone found himself face to face with the greatest task of his great life; and the obstacles were greater, and not smaller, than those he had ever before encountered. The Marquis of Hartington refused from the start to have anything to do with a Ministry which proposed Home Rule in any shape. Mr. Chamberlain and Sir George Trevelyan had pledged themselves beforehand against certain forms of Home Rule, but they entered the Cabinet, and it was yet to be seen whether Mr. Gladstone could produce a plan which they could accept. For weeks there were contradictory rumors every hour as to how the struggle in the Cabinet was going on; but all doubts were set at rest by Mr. Chamberlain and Sir George Trevelyan taking their seats one evening below the gangway and announcing to the world that they had been unable to agree with the plan of Mr. Gladstone. But Mr. Gladstone was not to be turned back from his great purpose by the desertion of any colleagues, however eminent, and went on with the preparation of his bills. The Tories meantime kept pestering him with questions every day, apparently expecting that such a mighty problem as the Constitution of a country could be fixed in a few hours. It is known that Mr. Gladstone intended to deal simultaneously with the National and the Land question, and the first intention was to bring in the Land Bill first, and then the Home Rule Bill. This plan was changed, and at last, on April 8, 1886, the Home Rule Bill was introduced.

The scene was as thrilling as any ever beheld in the House of Commons, and never had there been more abundant signs of absorbing public interest. In order to secure seats the Irish members began to arrive from six o'clock in the morning, and by eight or nine o'clock every seat in the House was seized. The result was that members spent all the day within the walls of the Westminster Palace—breakfasting, lunching, and dining there. When the sitting commenced a number of

members who had remained without seats brought in chairs and placed them on the floor of the House—a sight unprecedented, I believe in the history of the Assembly. Mr. Gladstone's entrance was marked by a striking incident. As he sat, pale, panting and still under the excitement of the great reception he had received from the crowds outside, the whole Liberal Party (with four exceptions) and all the Irish members sprang to their feet and cheered him enthusiastically. The four exceptions to this general mark of reverence and esteem were the four Dissident leaders. Lord Hartington, Sir Henry James, Sir George Trevelyan and Mr. Chamberlain remained sitting, and in a group by themselves they presented a curious look of isolation amid these surroundings. It took Mr. Gladstone upwards of three hours to set forth all the details of his great measure. His voice lasted well to the end, and the attention of the House never relaxed for a moment. The speech was calm in language, and the Tories were decent enough to abstain from any outbursts of impatience. Indeed, the general desire to catch every word of a speech in which every sentence was fateful produced a reticence from both friend and foe.



Ornament on leather case of Book of Armagh.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers."

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### HOME RULE DEFEATED.

It would be wearisome to go at any length through the story of the intrigues, negotiations, rise and fall of fortune that characterized the interval between the introduction and the second reading of the Home Rule Bill. It became evident from the start that Mr. Gladstone had enormously increased his difficulties in passing the Home Rule Bill by the introduction of the Land Bill. It was quite true that he had guaranteed the British Exchequer absolutely against loss; but his enemies were either stupid or unscrupulous enough to misrepresent his scheme and to travesty it into a plan which would lose to the British Exchequer every penny advanced, and ultimately add several millions to the burdens of the British taxpayer. Mr. Gladstone was implored, both then and at a later stage in the struggle, to drop his Land Bill. These appeals might have been addressed with some hope of success to an unscrupulous or a reckless politician, but they were hopeless to a statesman who felt the obligations of honor and the necessities of public interest. Some of Mr. Gladstone's chief opponents were quite ready to denounce Land Purchase at one stage of the controversy—as will presently be seen—and to advocate and propose it at another; but recklessness and indecency of this kind belong to a different order of mind from that of Mr. Gladstone.

Another difficulty of Mr. Gladstone was that his opponents brought entirely opposite objections to his plan. The retention of the Irish members was demanded by Mr Chamberlain; their exclusion was, according to the Marquis of Hartington, the logical necessity of the plan. Mr. Chamberlain objected to the scheme of Land Purchase; the Marquis of Hartington took very good care not to say anything which might injure the prospects of large monetary relief to the class of which he is a member. The speech of Mr. Gladstone at the Foreign Office to a meeting of his supporters was held to make the second reading of the bill secure; the same speech on the following day in the House of Commons—Mr. Chamberlain acknowledged that the two speeches were

exactly the same—lost the votes of those who the day before, at the Foreign Office, had practically pledged themselves to support the second reading

Among many of the absurd charges brought against Mr Gladstone for his conduct of the measure is that he sprang the question upon the country. The charge is entirely untrue. He exhausted every means to keep the question in control of the United Liberal Party, and to prevent its reference to the tumultuous and passionate tribunal of the ballot-boxes. In those clauses which provoked criticism he promised amendment, and the whole bill he proposed to postpone until an autumn sitting, after the House had affirmed the principle of Home Rule by passing the second reading. It was those who defeated the second reading of the bill, and so provoked the general election, that must bear the responsibility of all that has since happened. If the second reading had been carried the interval would have been spent in the calm consideration of the various points of difference among those who honestly accepted the principle of an Irish Legislative Assembly, and in all probability a compromise would have been arrived at. There had not arisen at this period any of that fierce bitterness which at present rages between the two sections of the Liberal Party, and so the points of difference could have been debated in calmness and settled by mutual concession.

But it was not to be. The enemies of Mr. Gladstone forced on the contest when they felt sure of victory. A meeting of the Dissident Liberals was held a few days before the second reading division. A letter was read from Mr. John Bright. The letter has never been produced, though Mr. Chamberlain distinctly undertook to produce it when this fact was commented upon by Mr. John Morley in a speech in the House of Commons, and the world is still ignorant of its character. It was certainly used as an argument in favor of voting against the bill, and it served more than anything else to bring about that fateful decision; but whether that was the advice of Mr. Bright, or whether he advised abstinence, is one of the political mysteries that possibly this generation will never penetrate. The decision of the Dissident Liberals to vote against the bill sealed its fate. The division took place on June 7. Mr. Gladstone wound up the debate with one of the most effective, most powerful, most



touching speeches he has ever delivered. But his eloquence for once was impotent; the bill was defeated by a majority of 30.

Gladstone, however, lived to carry a second Home Rule Bill triumphantly through the House of Commons. It was, of course, defeated by the Lords, but there is a tradition in England that no popular measure passing the lower House ever fails to become a law of the realm.



Ornament on top of Devenish Round Tower.  
From Petrie's "Round Towers," 400.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### THE "UNITED IRISH LEAGUE."

There is little more to be added to complete the history of the Irish Constitutional Movement. Most Irishmen and Irish-Americans interested in the struggle of their brothers in the old land for National Self-Government are acquainted with the facts leading up to the tragic death of the greatest of Irish modern leaders—the incorruptible and fearless Charles Stewart Parnell. It makes one of the saddest chapters in the checkered history of Ireland, and for many reasons it has been thought well to omit it altogether from this work.

For several years after Parnell's death Ireland was plunged in the turbulent sea of faction, but at last, through the efforts of William O'Brien, the "United Irish League" was established in one of the western counties and spread rapidly throughout the country. People who had been previously antagonistic stood together upon the same platform in the new organization and demanded similar action on the part of their leaders. A conference of both sections of the Irish members of Parliament was held, and the will of the people obeyed, by the election of John E. Redmond as chairman of the United Irish Party. This action was soon afterwards ratified by a National Convention. An auxiliary organization was next established in the United States, with John F. Finerty, of Chicago, as National President. Several branches have been founded in the principal cities of the Union, and many large sums of money have been forwarded to the home body. The fruits of the reuniting of the two sections in Ireland have been a large measure of local self-government and a liberal Land Act. Both enactments have been of great benefit to the country. The former has justified the advocates of Home Rule in claiming that the Irish people are fully capable of governing themselves; the latter will eventually result in the complete abolition of landlordism—the greatest curse of Ireland since the days of Cromwell. The Irish people and their representatives in the English House of Commons are now pressing the de-

mands of the laborers, and the leaders of English public opinion agree that a generous bill for the amelioration of the condition of the toilers of Ireland will be the principal feature of the next session of Parliament.

Meanwhile, the fight for Home Rule goes on, and remains the question of the hour *par excellence* in British politics. That the present generation will witness the opening of an Irish Parliament in Dublin with full control of Irish affairs is the hearty prayer and firm belief of the Irish people and their millions of sympathizers the world over.

F. J. RYAN.

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## AVONDALE.

### PARNELL'S HOME AMID THE WICKLOW HILLS.

A silent, square house, standing in the heart of the Wicklow hills. It was Parnell's home in what now seems the long ago, the house in which he was born, where his youth was spent. Looking at it from the banks of the Avonmore, that sings its way to the Meeting of the Waters, it is pathetic in its desolation. Not a sound falls upon the ear—only the murmur of the river! All else is silent, and the silence seems ordained. On one side of the house—the sloping sward, the green grass and a few trees dotting the lawn that leads down to the river; on the other side—the deep dip down to the stream below, the sides thick with mountain ash and red-berried holly and stunted oak.

Here and there an aspen tree, its leaves quivering and trembling, and sweet briar in the underwood. Standing there are the ruins of the old Keep, where in the years that are dead the sentinels of the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles kept vigil on the passes that led down from the English Pale; and when the word was passed that my Lord Deputy or his knights were moving among the hills with the swords of the foreign garrison, the beacon light on that old watch tower licked the darkness of the night, and the signals that warned and grew and grew until they girt the hills and ringed around the mountains of the Golden Spears, and sent the alarm away to Glenmalure, that same golden valley where my Lord Deputy Grey de Wilton went down into the dust, together with his

steel-clad esquires, on the morning they met the strong arms of the O'Bynes, of the Wicklow passes.

From this Keep one looks away to the mountains in the soft distance, which were an Irish garrison and a rebel home down to the days when Michael Dwyer laid down his long, sure flintlock and trusted to an English promise. At your feet in the gully, the River Avonmore, that in the summer weathers its way from its home 'mid the hills, rippling against the huge boulders that stand up awkwardly in the river's bed—a stream where the trout rises and the kingfisher flashes its light. But in the winter time it comes along swollen, angry, frothing, dashing its spray over the rocks, carrying along on its sullen rush the ash trees that grew by its banks and smashing them against the piers of the bridges.

A well-wooded country this Garden of Ireland looks from the old Keep, the purple hills in the distance fading into a gray background to that stretch of country where the Seven Churches are crumbling away, and where Glendalough lies solemn and silent. It is not so far away, there to the south, where Esmond Kyan made his stand against the yeomen and the red-coats at Arklow one hundred years ago—made such a stand that your foreign generals learned to their bitter cost that the Insurgents of '98 were not a mob of rebels, but soldiers of a nation. Behind are the roads that Joseph Holt kept clear during that sad but glorious time, and the bridge where he annihilated the Welsh mercenaries with thrust of pike.

There stands Avondale, in this grand old county, where the history of Ireland was written by the sword-point dipped in blood. Sad, indeed, the house looks even by day, but at night the tall trees in the avenue meet like funeral plumes overhead and shut out the light and the stars. Then the vapor on the waters of the river rolls along like the dust from the feet of marching men, and the water rail's cry is mournful, and the bark of the dog in the distance sounds dismal and dreary.

Avondale, square and modern, is eerie to those who know the history of the man who lived there as a lad and who began to dream dreams for the old land at an age when most of us are growing our boyish lessons.

They will tell you down there how Parnell would listen to the traditions of the great rising in '98, and how his eyes

would deepen and darken at the stories of cruel massacre. His chair in the library is there to-day, the same old chair into which he used to curl himself and read the heavy volumes containing the reports of the debates of the old Irish House of Commons. There is his nook by the fire-place in the hall where he used to sit and think out half-formed plans and skeletons—and the same heavy oak clock that to-day ticks its life away, just as it counted the hours when Parnell as a child watched its slow hands go round and wondered how they moved.

There in the hall, too, are specimens of ore that he had from the hills near by, the pillar of polished marble from his own quarries at Arklow. Then there is the bog-oak wheelbarrow, with its silver mountings, and the spade with which he turned the first sod of the East Clare Railway; the many camans the Gaels gave him, the caskets in which lie the parchments that made him a freeman of many a city, both here and across the wide, salt sea. But the man they did honor to for work done for Ireland is dead, and the dust has gathered on the caskets. It is unutterably sad looking at all these things. His hands had touched them. The books—his hands had opened them; they never raised up their voices against him and clamored for his undoing.

He, like an Irish king, is sleeping, sleeping  
In Irish earth, under the low, green mound,  
And Erin hath his memory in her keeping,  
His grave is sacred ground.









REV. MICHAEL P. O'HICKEY, D.D., M. R. I. A.,  
Professor of Gaelic, Maynooth College.

SECTION VII.

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RE-CREATING A NATION

OR,

THE WORK OF THE GAELIC LEAGUE

BY

RIGHT REV PATRICK O'DONNELL, Bishop of Raphoe

VERY REV DR M P O'HICKEY, of Maynooth College

SIR THOMAS GRATTAN ISMONDE, Bart

VERY REV DR RICHARD HENEBRY, Ph D

PROF KUNO MEYER, Ph D

THOMAS O'NEILL RUSSELL

CONTAINING

OUR LANGUAGE, OUR NOBLEST INHERITANCE—THE LANGUAGE OF  
OUR SIRS—THE INTELLECTUAL REVIVAL IN IRELAND—A  
CRITICAL ESSAY ON IRISH MUSIC—A SURVEY OF  
CELTIC PHILOLOGY—IRISH MANUSCRIPT  
LITERATURE





# RE-CREATING A NATION

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## INTRODUCTORY.

BY P. F. HOLDEN, NAT. SEC. GAELIC LEAGUE IN AMERICA.

The object of the Gaelic League is the upbuilding of an Irish Ireland. The object of the American branch is to aid the movement at home morally and financially, and to secure for those of our race now in this country and for their children, the future citizens of America, an opportunity to learn something of the language, literature, history, music, and characteristics of their ancestors.

Our people in Ireland have, it is generally admitted, drifted away through various causes from Gaelic ideals and customs, the Gaelic League would bring them back to their original moorings and hold them there. It would make the Irish language the language of the home, the Church, the school-house, and the market place, simply because that language is the natural medium of expression amongst the Irish people. It is not at all sought to banish English as a commercial factor. To Gaelic Leaguers there is no reason in the world why the Irish cannot be a bi-lingual people, as is the case in many other nations. The Gaelic League advocates the revival of Irish music, Irish dancing, and all Irish customs. It would supplant cricket and croquet with football and hurling, it would banish the woolen fabrics of Glasgow, Liverpool and Newcastle-on-Tyne from the stores and farm-houses of Ireland, and in their place it would bring the native industries of Cork, Dublin and Galway. But, above all things, it would cultivate an Irish way of looking at things—in other words, it would make for an Irish world-outlook suited to the ideas and capacities of the people.

How far our brothers are succeeding in this immense undertaking may be judged from the very encouraging reports sent to American newspapers at frequent intervals in late years, as well as by the verbal accounts of the officers of the Gaelic League in America who have made extensive journeys through the country. Irish is now being taught in the col-

leges, convents and National schools. Irish sermons are being preached from cathedral and chapel by archbishops, bishops and priests, while not even the Irish cardinal himself disdains to speak at a public meeting in the National tongue. This is great news for the advocates of an Irish Ireland. It encourages those of us who have been forced to remain exiles in this country to lend a helping hand in the struggle at home as well as to do something to elevate the social condition of our people here. There is much that we can do. To begin with, we should at least expect that Irish history would be taught in the schools built and supported by the Irish people and their children. For nearly one hundred years Irish Americans, taken as a whole, have learned nothing of their country and their ancestors other than that which was furnished them by the stage Irishman and the vulgar cartoons in the so-called comic weekly and daily newspapers. The great objection on the part of Irish and Irish-American pastors to having Irish history taught in the parochial schools is the cost of the text-books now available. They say that the children of Irish parents are already sufficiently taxed and cannot well afford to pay a dollar or more for a history of Ireland in addition to other expenses. The Gaels of Chicago have set themselves to the task of doing away with this obstacle, and in the near future they hope to have ready for publication a simple but complete catechism of Irish history that will retail at a merely nominal price. This done, we can reasonably expect that millions of Irish children will be learning to be proud of their nationality, proud of their Irish names, and filled with the desire to learn more of the language, literature and history of the ancestors who took such a glorious part in the world's civilization. Already we have accomplished much. Branches of the Gaelic League exist in almost every principal city in America, and their influence on the community in which they live is great and wide-spreading. We have five or six newspapers already printing articles in Gaelic. We have several Irish music clubs, and perhaps even better experts on the bagpipe and violin than exist to-day in Ireland. Gaelic chairs have been instituted in two or three of the principal educational establishments, from California to Washington, D. C. What is yet possible for us to accomplish by missionary work and agitation in the press and from the platform is evident in the recent action

of the Boston City Council in directing that Gaelic be taught in the high schools of that city.

In the following pages the leaders of the Gaelic movement in Ireland have set forth the necessity as well as the desirability of de-Anglicising Ireland; they have shown the value and intrinsic worth of the things that are peculiarly Irish, and the advanced position their readoption and perpetuation will secure for the Irish people in the eyes of all other nations.

Chicago, Nov., 1903.



Composed from the Book of Kells.

## CHAPTER I.

### OUR LANGUAGE OUR NOBLEST INHERITANCE.

*By Right Rev. Patrick O'Donnell, Bishop of Raphoe.*

If the work of the Gaelic League is worth doing at all, it is worth doing well and now. It is now or never with the Irish language. We have the men, we have the motives, and we can have the means for a revival of the Gaelic speech in every region where our race has found a home. But let the Irish-speaking districts in the old country be contracted during the next quarter of a century, as during the last; let the brilliant young scholars, priests and laymen who have pledged their life-work to the cause of our ancient language be upset in this campaign; let the evidences disappear which living men possess of the marvelous beauty of our Celtic speech on the lips of the old men of our mountain glens, and it would appear very doubtful whether even the magic of a native Parliament could restore vigorous life to the inspiring language of the Gael.

It sounds profane to ask whether our ancient tongue is worth preserving. Yes, it is, even as the spoken language, and so well worth preserving that if the effort be not made, and, with God's blessing, made successfully, we should be held accountable for casting from us what is, in the natural order, apart from the national spirit, the noblest inheritance of our race.

It is the misfortune of many good Irishmen to know nothing of the Irish language, however anxious about it; and, through an untoward history, it is the way with many others to care but little for its fate, because the invader has branded it as an inferior tongue. But it never happened that any one competent to form an opinion who knew Irish did not esteem it as a noble vehicle of human thought and feeling.

So long as Latin remained the one language of letters in Europe it was customary for writers to vary the uncouthness of nouns in the vernacular. To this custom our early Irish writers were no exception. But this language, spoken at the Enach Tireconnill in November, '98, and at Gartan in June, '97, was no uncouth language. It was the most beau-

tiful I ever heard. Neither is the tongue spoken every day in the Aran Islands or in the glens of Cork or Kerry an unworthy medium of communication between man and man. It is the language for the poet, scholar and orator, as well as for the farmer, shepherd and artisan. Its power of expression, its tunefulness, its compass are not surpassed. The blackbird in the bushes, the mist upon the morn, the sunshine on the mountain, the cataract tumbling down from Erin's hills, the billows thundering in her caverns or dashing against the cliffs, the storm in the valley, the river sweeping majestically through the plain, have all their counterparts in the language of this island of smiles and tears.

Neither the memories of the past, dear as they are to us all, nor the service of antiquarian research would move the hard workers of to-day to devote their lives to the revival of Irish if the language in itself were not a noble language. But hear it well spoken (in conversation, argument, sermon or poem) and a man of Irish fibre is conscious that he is listening to THE language—the one language that touches every chord of his feeling, sounds the depths of his heart, follows the turns of his mind and expresses the yearnings of his whole being.

Before pronouncing the Celtic tongue as guttural in sound go first and hear it as it is spoken, with unschooled poetic tongue and the salt of proverb, by way of those fine old Irishmen that are still to be found in the mountain valleys of our land, nature's gentlemen, yes, and true gentlemen by the blood of a Milesian pedigree that perhaps cannot be reckoned through all the generations, but that certainly can be seen in every gesture of the hand, in every expression of the countenance, in every word of welcome and in every act of hospitality. Talk of these men as ignorant! They have an education, a refinement, even a wise, far-seeing judgment of men and things that books will never bring. You will find, too, in the most remote parts of Ireland, tall, venerable women of deliberate bearing and queenly mien, who never perhaps left their native parish, but who would not be considered out of place if transported to the lofty halls of a lordly castle. They speak a beautiful language, these people, and they speak it beautifully, and before people bearing Irish names commit themselves to indifference about the Irish tongue let them try this test or hear a sermon preached in



our soul stirring language by an Irish priest who knows its idiom and is master of its vocabulary.

Some of the best Irish I have ever heard was spoken by old men who were Protestants around my native place; and it is a good sign that Irishmen, without distinction of creed, are now interested in the revival movement. I hope the movement may advance with swelling wave into the parts of Ireland where Irish is no longer spoken. It is a language for the whole island. In a country so far apart from the rest of the world there is no danger we shall know too many languages. The Irish language movement might sweep the whole island, and Ireland become Irish speaking from the center to the sea without injuring the cultivation of any other language or preventing our young people from acquiring that knowledge of English which is so needed for our emigrants. The truth is that the Irish revival movement is the most hopeful program yet launched in our midst for the improvement of education all round, and for bringing back again to Erin that love of learning and of books that was so characteristic of her past.

The language spoken at Tara and Croghan, at Kincora and Cashel, Emonia and Filach, the tongue of Finn and of Cuchullin, of Maeve and Macha, of Nial, Brian and Hugh Roe, the speech in which Patrick catechised; the mother tongue of Erin's saints and scholars and heroes, the mother tongue of the Irish race, should last as long as the race itself to interpret its feelings and voice its aspirations in every region where even a few Irishmen are gathered together. Now is the time to check its decline and spread far its sway. What Father O'Growney, Dr. Douglas Hyde, Dr. Hickey, Father Henebry, Mr. MacNeil and their colleagues agree upon is sure to be as good a plan as need be desired. Let us give them a fair chance of doing a work which they can do so well, and which is an obligation on our people. And, with a fair field, let us spare them that carping criticism, the spirit of which seems to cling to us as a national failing not alone indeed in this department of effort for the Irish language.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE LANGUAGE OF OUR SIRE.

*By Rev. Michael P. O'Hickey, D. D., M. R. I. A., Professor  
of Irish at Maynooth College.*

The Irish language is a vast subject, and admits of varied and almost endless treatment. I can neither discuss it in all its aspects nor deal with it fully and exhaustively under any one aspect. The chief difficulty is to decide what exactly I should say, and what I should leave unsaid. On the whole, I cannot, perhaps, do better than discuss the following questions:—(1) Can the Irish language be preserved and how? (2) Should it be preserved, revived, cultivated and perpetuated, and why? Before I enter upon the discussion of these questions it may, however, be well to set forth briefly the aims and objects of the Gaelic League. Though I am not an official representative of the League, though I am merely a worker in the cause in a purely private capacity, yet, because of my intimate connection with the Central Branch and with the Executive Committee of the organization, I may fairly claim to be an authoritative exponent of its views and aims. The Gaelic League seeks to preserve, revive and perpetuate the ancient language of Ireland; to promote its cultivation; to arrest its decadence; rouse public opinion in its favor, and change the present mistaken, pernicious and degrading fashion, which is responsible more than anything else for its decay; to thoroughly secure and effectively safeguard its position where it is still spoken and place it in all respects on a secure, satisfactory and permanent footing; to gradually extend the area of its use as a spoken tongue—making the Irish-speaking districts their chief base of operations, and working from these districts outward—until Irish becomes (side by side with English, but ever receiving the preference where choice is possible) the daily speech of the entire nation; to make the primary education of the country in the Irish-speaking districts thoroughly and unreservedly bi-lingual; to remove the present fatal and exasperating restrictions upon the teaching of Irish in the so-called National schools, and to have the lan-

guage taught as a matter of course and as a subject of the first importance in all the educational institutions of the land, from the highest to the lowest; in fine, to turn the people of the country back upon their own past, upon their history and their ancient literature, to induce them to study these things until they know them and love them; until they become part and parcel of themselves; until they are interwoven with the very texture of their intellectual nature and twined around the tendrils of their hearts. Such, in brief, is the programme of the Gaelic League; such are its aims and objects

The programme is a vast one, and as glorious and inspiring as it is vast. But there are those who think it is an impossible programme. I do not at all share that view; nor do I believe that it is held by anyone who has carefully thought the matter out. I do not for a moment underrate the difficulty of the enterprise. The forces arrayed against us are many and formidable. The difficulties to be overcome, the obstacles to be surmounted, are neither few nor trifling. We have to fight against false fashion, against appalling indifference and apathy, against prejudice as deep-rooted and inveterate as it is unintelligible, against snobbery of the vilest and most degrading description, against officialism, high and low—educational, judicial, magisterial, and otherwise. The odds against us are therefore terrible, but they are not overwhelming. The difficulties that strew our path do not daunt us in the least. We know full well that we labor in a noble and deserving cause, that we are engaged in a work of the highest national importance; that we are striving for the perpetuation not only of our national language, but of our national distinctiveness and identity; that the interests for which we do battle are high and even holy.

What others have done, why may we not do? What has been done in Greece, in Hungary, in Bohemia, in Provence, in Belgium, in Wales, in Finland, is assuredly not impossible in Ireland. What is being done successfully at the present hour in Brittany and in Highland Scotland we surely need not pronounce impossible, nor despair of accomplishing. The difficulties that others have had to face were in many cases not less grave than those with which we are confronted; in some cases, as a matter of fact, they were far more formidable and disheartening. But they despised difficulties,

brushed aside obstacles, and have either triumphed all along the line or are far advanced along the road to victory. Why should not we achieve equal success? Shall it be said that Ireland is less patriotic than Finland or Bohemia? Are Irishmen less capable of unselfish and sustained national effort and enterprise? Do high and noble and inspiring ideals appeal with less force to us than to those who inhabit other lands?

The Irish language, we hear people say, is dying a natural death. Nothing of the kind. It is being done to death, it is being strangled; everything has been against it, and everybody. There has been an all-round conspiracy, active and passive, to crush it. We must insist that there shall be an end of this. The language of our race must have fair play, and so much the Gaelic League means that it shall have, and its members are numerous now and are becoming more numerous day by day. The fate of the language is, therefore, in our own hands.

Let us examine its position and prospects somewhat in detail. It is still spoken by well over a half million of our people; the exact number, as shown by the last census, being in round numbers, 760,000. About one-seventh of the population of the country is, therefore, Irish-speaking. There is scarcely any country in which there are not Irish speakers, however few they may be in some cases, but the vast bulk of the Irish-speaking population is along the Atlantic seaboard, from Lough Foyle to Waterford Harbor—in Donegal, Mayo, Galway, Clare, Kerry, Cork, and Waterford. This is by no means an unimportant factor in the case. Surely, one-seventh of the population, thus concentrated, is not a bad foundation to build upon. As a matter of fact, there are European languages which are not spoken by so many people, and which are, nevertheless, in a most flourishing condition.

If all who speak the Irish language could write and read it, which very little effort would soon enable them to do, if it came before them weekly in their newspapers, if they taught their children to speak it—a thing they should hang their heads in shame for not doing; if they insisted upon having their children taught Irish as well as English in the schools; if they prayed in it in their homes and in their churches; if they heard the word of God announced in it on



Sundays; if they loved it as they should, took it to their hearts and cherished it there, treasured it beyond price, as the invaluable national heirloom which it unquestionably is —how could it ever die out where it is spoken at present? It were utterly impossible. So far from dying, or even decaying, it would flourish once more, and gradually extend. The Irish-speaking area would rapidly expand. Along the Irish-speaking frontier the English-speaking population, through constant intercourse with Irish speakers, would gradually acquire an aptitude in speaking their own language, and so would the Irish-speaking frontier keep constantly moving into the English-speaking area. Along the border the long proscribed and neglected language of our sires would be ever making new conquests, ever annexing new territory, until ultimately, and, I believe before many generations should have passed away, the exclusively English-speaking area would disappear altogether and the Irish-speaking border become identical with the Irish coast line.

Here it may be well not to overlook another important factor in the situation. The rural districts are constantly feeding the cities and large towns. The cities and towns practically renew themselves every few generations by accessions from the country. This is a well-known economic fact. Think of the possibilities which this opens up for the success, under favorable conditions, of a movement like ours. If the Irish speakers who migrate in such numbers from the country to the towns and cities had the proper spirit, the spirit which we are seeking to arouse; if they assumed the proper attitude toward their language, the attitude which true patriotism suggests and demands; if they brought with them, deep down in their hearts, an undying love for the language of their fathers, a devotion to it unchanging and unchangeable; if they spoke it on every possible occasion in preference to the language of the alien, they would eventually conquer the towns, and the cities, too, and make them Irish-speaking in the main.

The Gaelic League was founded to strive for the objects I have outlined, and to strive for them on the lines I have indicated. Five years ago it had its beginning in Dublin, and a very small beginning it was. Seven men, mostly young and all of them unknown and without influence, assembled at the house of one of their number to consider the position



of the national language. Apart from their interest in the ancient language of the country, they had scarcely a single interest in common. The result of their conference was the establishment of a society to work on go-ahead and thoroughly practical lines for the preservation of our native tongue. The society thus launched was called the Gaelic League. The programme of the League was soon before the public. Its membership rapidly increased, for the founders meant work, were deady in earnest, and threw themselves heart and soul into the enterprise. For a short time the operations of the League were confined to Dublin, but from the very outset the organization of the provinces, and especially of the Irish-speaking districts, constituted the principal plank in its programme.

The movement thus inaugurated soon began to extend. Branches of the League were formed in various places, and were duly affiliated to the parent branch, which subsequently began to be called the Central Branch. Everything considered, the success so far achieved by the Gaelic League is simply amazing. During the short period of its existence it has considerably impressed the mind of the country, and is impressing it more and more every day. The movement which it directs gains force and momentum as it advances. Its progress in all directions last year—a year consecrated to such heroic and patriotic memories—was greater far than the progress made during all the previous years of its existence. Henceforward still greater and more rapid progress may be confidently looked for. We are striving for the establishment of branches and classes in all our cities, towns and villages, and we believe that our striving will not be in vain. We are seeking to have Irish taught in all our colleges, seminaries, and schools, and to have the present vexatious restrictions upon its teaching in primary schools removed, so that all our young people may have every facility afforded to learn to at least read and write the language of their fathers. The Irish-speaking rural districts, however, form the chief object of our solicitude. They are hardest to work and organize, while at the same time they merit most attention, and should be the most promising and fruitful field for our operations. They constitute, undoubtedly, the strongholds of the language. There, if the language is to live, its position must at any cost be secured.

The easiest way to compass this would be to have education in all such districts made bi-lingual in the fullest sense. To effect this we are straining every nerve, and until it is an accomplished fact we shall not relax our efforts. If the country made a united demand for it, our views would soon prevail, and we are endeavoring to educate public opinion up to that point. Meanwhile, however, we must do what lies in our power to meet the needs of such districts. Something is at present being done. We have inaugurated an Irish National Language Fund, and have appealed to the Irish race for subscriptions to it. The object of this fund is to enable us to send into the Irish-speaking rural districts traveling teachers, who will also act as organizers. Their work will be to establish branches of the Gaelic League where it may be possible to do so; to organize classes and to teach them; to train teachers as rapidly as possible who will take charge of these classes, so that they themselves may be free to proceed elsewhere to continue their work; to organize public opinion in favor of the movement, and secure for it as much influential and general support as possible. We have sent a teacher already into Connaught, and we are about to send one into Munster, and very soon we hope to send a third into Ulster. For the organization of Leinster, in which province very little Irish is spoken outside of Dublin, we must rely, for the present at least, on the establishment and working of branches of the League. Were it in our power we should send a teacher—nay, several teachers—into every county of the thirty-two, but our resources do not yet, at all events, enable us to do more than I have stated, and we must, of course, proceed in a strictly business-like way.

How far we shall enlarge upon our present plan of operations depends altogether upon the amount of patronage extended to the Irish Language National Fund. But whatever we have attempted or accomplished, whatever our past successes or our future prospects, certain it is that the mission of the Gaelic League will never be wholly fulfilled, nor will the need of such an organization cease until every man and woman, every boy and girl in Ireland, from the highest grade in the social scale to the lowest, reads and writes the language of our fathers, the language of our saints, the language of our great missionaries, the language of our heroes and sages, the language of Patrick, Columbeille and Brigid; the

language of Cormac Mac Art, Brian Boru and Cormac MacCullinan; the language of the O'Neills and the O'Donnells; the language of the Yellow Ford, of Benburb and of Limerick's walls; the language of the Four Masters and of Geoffrey Keating; the language of Donnchadh Ruadh, Taobh Gaodhlach and the other Munster bards, than whose melodious strains no sweeter music ever saluted Irish ears; the language which holds our literature, our history and our traditions; the language which shaped our thoughts and our ideals, and which still enshrines and so marvelously reflects them; the language of our venerable and storied past; the language, in fine, of our nation and of our race for full two thousand years and more.

Should not our ancestral tongue, then, be preserved at any cost? Most assuredly it should. We should consider no effort, no sacrifice that can be demanded from us too great to attain this end—to hand on to those who come after us the speech of those who during the vanished centuries dwelt before us in this ancient land. The movement for the preservation, revival, cultivation and perpetuation of our native speech is of immense national, intellectual, religious and moral significance and importance. Of this you may rest assured. Credit no one who asserts, and would seek to make you believe, the contrary. Treat his vaporings with the contempt they deserve:

“Oh! Irishmen, be Irish still, stand by the dear old tongue,  
Which, like the ivy to a ruin, to your native land hath clung;  
Oh! snatch this relic from the wreck, the only and the last,  
And cherish in your heart of hearts the language of the past.”

That a distinctive language is the most powerful bond of nationality; its most manifest and impressive symbol; the only certain and indefeasible guarantee of its continuity and permanence, is now pretty generally acknowledged, and is beginning to be acknowledged more and more every day. The idea is not new. How slow soever we may be to realize and admit it in Ireland, it is well understood in other lands.

In the dawn of the Christian era the Roman historian, Tacitus, realized its truth, for he wrote: “The language of the conqueror in the mouth of the conquered is ever the language of the slave.” The Dutch realized it, for one of their

proverbs runs thus: "No language, no nation." The great German scholar and critic, Schlegel, realized it, for he wrote: "The care of the national language is a sacred trust." The cultured Archbishop Trench, an Englishman and a Protestant, realized it, for he wrote: "A nation which allows her language to go to ruin is parting with the best half of her intellectual independence, and testifies to her willingness to cease to exist." More than half a century ago our own Davis realized it, for he wrote: "The language of a nation's youth is the only easy and full speech for its manhood and its age, and when the language of its cradle dies, itself craves a tomb. . . . A people without a language of its own is only half a nation. A nation should guard its language more than its territories—'tis a surer barrier, and more important frontier than fortress or river."



## CHAPTER III.

### THE INTELLECTUAL REVIVAL IN IRELAND.

*By Sir Thomas Grattan Esmonde, Bart*

The question of an intellectual revival is a somewhat difficult subject to deal with—one that may lend itself to numerous conjectures, or else may raise questions affecting sharply divergent views. On this question we will admit there is a difference of opinion. Some say emphatically that there is an Intellectual Revival; others with equal emphasis that there is none whatever. In my opinion—I give it, of course, for what it is worth—there is an Intellectual Revival in Ireland, or at all events the commencement of one. I will give some reasons for my opinion.

To begin with, there is a patriotic effort being made to revive, or rather to make more widely known and to develop our Irish music. And in this connection we can never forget the debt of gratitude this country owes to Thomas Moore. Tom Moore has been variously and adversely criticised. Not that this is an unusual circumstance in Ireland, where everybody is criticised more or less, and where nearly everybody seems to devote a fair share of time and energy to criticising everybody else. Tom Moore has been criticised. He has been called all sorts of names. But whatever Tom Moore may be said to have been, he was unquestionably a man of genius, a man of whom intelligent and educated Irishmen may be proud, and to whom, and his associate, Bunting, we should be everlastingly grateful for their splendid services toward saving so many of our national melodies from oblivion.

The directors of this musical movement have also been criticised. I take it that this circumstance does not depress them unduly. It is easier to criticise than to do. They have but to continue doing, or trying to do, and eventually we may hope for a recognized Irish opera, as the outcome of their endeavors.

Then there is a laudable attempt to create an Irish drama, the first systematic effort with which we are acquainted. It may be said that no striking success has attended this attempt so far, and that in some respects the results of this attempt



have been disappointing, but still the attempt is being made, and its makers deserve recognition and thanks for making it.

We have made an unmistakable advance in the development of Irish literature. Many able and scientific workers are laboring in this field. The works of pioneers of the past generations are being utilized. Increased and increasing light is thrown on the unexhaustible sources of our history, folk-lore and mythology. So that now-a-days no one can say that there is nothing Irish to read. At no time has there been a more abundant output of Irish literary work. These circumstances alone would go to show that the intellect of Ireland is developing in energy, but that there are further signs for those who care to read them.

One of the most striking of these is the movement for the encouragement of Irish industry—a most practical and unanswerable proof of the vitality of our intellectual revival. This movement is of immense concern. It deserves the support of every practical Irishman, but always in the condition that Irish products are equal in quality and in price to the articles supplied by the foreigner.

But the most significant sign of the intellectual revival in Ireland is the movement for the revival of the Irish language. This great movement, in its present shape, is the work of the Gaelic League. Long may it prosper in its work. The language movement is a most extraordinary one, when we reflect on the circumstances of Ireland, and the conditions of her immediate past. Consider how the Irish language was dead to all outward seeming. Consider how the people of Ireland had abandoned it. How, even in Irish-speaking districts, it was looked upon with shame if not with contempt; and the explanation of all this was very weak and very unworthy.

We were told, and we know it to be true, of course, that laws were passed against the Irish tongue. Such laws were undoubtedly passed, but they were passed hundreds of years ago, and have long since fallen into abeyance. So much for the law and for the excuse the law afforded. Then it was said, and, doubtless, truly said, that the educational authorities in Ireland were opposing the Irish language, and deprecated its spread among the people. I do not wish to argue that point. But supposing the educational authorities to have been unfavorable to the study of the Irish language,

how was it that for years, I might say for generations, nobody protested against their policy?

We had not to contend as the Hungarians, for instance, had to contend against the Teutonic power, or as the Finns and Poles have even now to contend against Russian and German autocracy; or as Bretons and Basques have at this moment to contend against the systematic policy of the French Government, as directed against the native languages of these races. And yet all these peoples have preserved their native languages, and even in our time they have many of them produced great men, giants of literature, speaking and writing in their proscribed tongues. Seinkiewicz, the Pole, and Jokai, the Hungarian, are famous all the world over where men read books. Were it known all the difficulties that these people fought against and conquered, our difficulties, such as they were, would vanish like smoke in comparison to theirs. Yet we deliberately gave up the Irish language, and gave it up apparently of our own choice.

Suddenly a miraculous change has come into the spirit of this nation. Everywhere people are interested in Gaelic. Everywhere people are learning Gaelic. Danish Dublin and Norman Wexford are as eager to cherish the language of Finn and Fergus, of Oisín and Deirdri, as Gaelic Cork or Kerry, or Galway, or Donegal. In fact, the non-Irish-speaking districts of Ireland are, if anything, more eager to master the undeniable difficulties of the language than those more fortunate places where it has still lingered in the homes of the people. It is quite within the region of probability that one of these days Dublin will prove one of the most Irish-speaking parts of Ireland, so warmly has the matter been taken up there by all sorts and conditions of men, and let me add, of women.

This is an extraordinary state of things, considering the previous circumstances of Ireland and the conditions of her immediate past. By and by it will be chronicled as the most surprising development of later Irish history. The Gaelic League has indeed worked a miracle, and if this miracle be not a sign of a revival of Irish intellect I do not know what else it is. These are some of the reasons which led me to think that there is really the beginning of an intellectual revival in this land of ours. I could give other symptoms of this revival but space will not allow.

I come now to another question of great importance, and one in which I regret to say no interest is taken whatever. I allude to the question of the publication of Irish records. The history of Ireland since the "Four Masters" has yet to be written, and even the marvellous work of the "Four Masters" stands in great need of development and elucidation. The point to which I would like to direct the attention of intellectual Ireland is the necessity for the publication of our Irish records. For years past I have been like one crying in the wilderness, urging on the government the publication of Irish records, state papers, and historical manuscripts. No one in this country apparently thinks the matter worth considering. No expression of public opinion has made itself audible during all these years in regard to it. My small efforts have, so far, been rewarded with but small results. I have, however, been able, after an infinity of trouble, to induce the English Historical Manuscript Commission to publish the manuscripts of the Irish Franciscans, a unique and most valuable historical collection, in which there is a considerable element of Celtic work, and some Celtic work of immense value.

These manuscripts have now been some three years in process of publication, and have not yet been issued. I understand now that they are only partially to be published. I am by no means confident that what is to be published of them will give much satisfaction to the Irish historical or antiquarian students, and I assert that it is most unsatisfactory, while the Historical Manuscript Commission and the Record Commission are so busily engaged in publishing English state papers, that so small a share of their attention should be devoted to the state papers and the records of Ireland, and that when once in a way they do take up the publication of Irish records, the occasion is not utilized to better purpose.

It is of the greatest possible importance that the history of our country should be known to us, that our ancient legends and mythology should be preserved. We have numbers of able men in Ireland eminently qualified for this work, while the mass of material is perfectly amazing. The illustrious O'Curry tells us that there are thousands upon thousands of priceless Irish manuscripts unpublished, unread in the libraries of the Irish Academy and of Trinity College. Our Irish Record Office is a storehouse of historical information.

Bermingham Tower, in Dublin Castle, is crammed with it. The British Museum, the Bodlian Library, have immense quantities of unpublished manuscripts relating to Ireland. All over the Continent, in the Low Countries, in France, in Switzerland, in Germany, in Spain, and last but not least, in the wonderful Vatican Archives there are innumerable papers and documents relating to the history and literature of Ireland.

All these sources of information are so far practically untapped. It is time that something should be done to make them reveal their hidden treasures. We must remember that, after all, our time is short. In a few years our place here will know us no more; and while the precious and unredeemable period of our short span of existence is fleeting away we are standing still in the matter of historical information.

We cannot afford to stand still. We cannot afford to lose our precious time. The knowledge of our own history and of all that the word history implies is essential to our useful service of our country; that history which has been so beautifully described as "That ancient and lovely history, which has the romance of chivalry, the dignity of learning and piety, and the fragrance of a far-off fairy tale." Why not insist upon obtaining as much knowledge of this history as we can?

The history, the literature, the mythology, and the traditions of Ireland for three thousand years are stored in the public archives, useless, unknown. Why not insist on a commencement being made of their publication? Why should we not have an Irish Record Commission, or an Irish Historical Manuscript Commission, to make a beginning of the important task of removing the obscurity which shrouds the annals of Ireland? The existing commissions are of no use to us; they are unsympathetic; they are ignorant—I use not the word in an offensive sense, but we all know well that no Englishman can ever know anything or understand anything about Ireland. We can have no satisfaction without a Record Commission of our own. The intellect of Ireland should clamor for its appointment, and should enlist the support of the public opinion of the country for the establishment of an Irish Record Commission, a reasonable demand, which has been made for so long, and which I, for one, will continue to make as long as I have a seat in the English Parliament.

Another question to which we should direct our attention



is that of the preservation of Irish antiquities. Any intelligent and patriotic Irishman who travels through Ireland must be grieved and shocked at the condition of the antiquities of the country. Everywhere he sees marks of ruthless destruction. Infinitely more injury has been done the antiquities of Ireland by the selfishness and the cupidity of Irishmen themselves than by all the storms of war which have swept this country time out of mind. Any one who has taken the trouble to look over so recent a publication as an ordnance map will realize the wholesale obliteration of our antiquarian monuments, which has taken place even within the past few years. Old castles pulled down to build piggeries, chiselled stones torn out of our ancient churches and monasteries to build ditches and to hang gates upon; raths, duns, Druid stones, scattered, overthrown for so-called utilitarian purposes.

The situation to any intelligent man is simply heart-rending. And all the time this constant destruction in our land of what is, in one sense, the most priceless possession of any country, and should be held sacred in ours, evokes no condemnation from anybody. It is regarded at all hands with equanimity if not with tacit approval.

I repeat, our ancient ruins are among our most precious possessions. They should be held holy by the public opinion of the country. As things go, there is nobody, or there has been nobody, to protect them. A small number of these ruins have been placed under the nominal protection of the Board of Works, but in this respect the performance of the Board of Works are many on paper, and appear mainly in the printed statements of the yearly Civil Service estimates.

The duty of protecting our ancient monuments, as well as the right, which implies the duty, rests with the people of our country; and enlightened public opinion should induce the people to discharge their duty with zeal as well as with reverence. Under the new Local Government Act certain powers in the direction of the preservation of our ancient ruins are given to our county councils. These powers, as small as they are, will, I hope, be eventually utilized. I repeat again for the third time that our ancient monuments are among our most precious national possessions. Their loss is irreparable. Every year they are growing less, and if something be not shortly done, in the direction I indicate,



this country will have nothing more to recommend it to the historical or antiquarian mind than the newest township of the newest territory of the newest of new countries.

I would respectfully suggest to all who agree with me that they should band themselves together for the preservation of the monuments of old Ireland. They should join the various antiquarian societies, of which there are several in this country. They should join these societies; they should furnish their minds with the history of the local antiquities, with the traditions of their localities. In this way they will not merely add another source of enjoyment in their own lives, but they will confer an incalculable boon upon the Ireland of the future.

In connection with the antiquities of Ireland I would direct your attention to a question of great moment, which has, apparently, aroused no interest in our country whatever. I allude to the case of the Irish gold ornaments, which has been taken out of Ireland and illegally acquired by the British Museum. Some few of us have been making a long and difficult fight to obtain their restoration. During this fight the intellect of Ireland appears to have been asleep. We have received no assistance from it, and, speaking broadly, no one seems to care two straws about the matter.

The story of the abstraction and retention of these ornaments by the British Museum is a sorry one—I say nothing about it for the present. These ornaments, however, belong to Ireland by right and by law. It is only by the gross remissness of those whose duty it was to guard the rights of Ireland in this particular that they have ever departed from our shores. I will content myself by saying that they are absolutely essential to make the collection of Irish gold ornaments in the Irish National Museum perfect. With these gold ornaments the collection in our National Museum will be far and away the finest of its own kind in the world, and will compare favorably, merely as a collection of gold ornaments, with the most famous collections in existence. I speak from my own experience, as I have seen most of the great treasure hoards of other countries, from the Aztec collection in the National Museum of Mexico to the Mycenaean collection at Athens.

At the time when these ornaments were taken from us, just as in the matter of our language, Ireland remained supine

and allowed herself to be robbed. She might have taken a lesson from the tactics of her despoilers. Time after time, since the struggle for the restoration of these ornaments began, the British Museum, the English Archæological Societies, and men of learning in the English antiquarian world, fully understanding the great value of these treasures, have protested against their restoration to Ireland, and have used, and are using, every effort to frustrate our attempts to regain them. Only the other day a petition was ordered to be presented to the king by the English Antiquarian Society, praying his majesty to use all his influence to prevent the restoration of these ornaments to Ireland. Meanwhile our public boards, our antiquarian societies, do nothing. They leave the English in possession of the field, and by their silence they condone this latest plunder of this country.

Notwithstanding the apathy of the Irish public, we have been able to do something towards bringing the British Museum to book, and I am glad to say that, at long last, the English Treasury have gone to law with the Museum to compel them to give up these ornaments. In a very short time you will probably see the action of the English courts on this matter. The English courts will, no doubt, administer the law, but justice, as we know, is blind, and I am not at all certain that the voice of an angry Irish people might not have something to say in influencing a decision in favor of Ireland's rightful claim for the restoration of her own property. If we are to get back these ornaments we must now be up and doing, and I would appeal to the energy of intellectual Ireland to save those priceless relics to the country. (Since the foregoing was written the gold ornaments have been restored.—Compilers )

Another direction in which we might direct the reviving or the revived intelligence of Ireland is in the encouragement of Irish art. Art is a plant of very slow growth. It requires care. It requires generous treatment. Ireland, for many reasons, has not been a propitious soil for the cultivation of the fine arts. At the present moment Irish art is only struggling for existence. A little is being done in metal work. Some of our jewelers—notably Messrs. Johnson, of Dublin, whose exhibit elicited so much praise at the Paris exhibition—are doing some really beautiful work in reproduction of ancient metal work of Ireland. But this is only a minor

branch of art, and it is being carried on with us only in a small way. Ancient Irish metal work is exquisitely beautiful; old Irish silver commands the highest price in the market. We have no lack of models, or of inspiration, for the development of this branch in Ireland; all that is wanted is its patronage by the Irish public. When we buy articles of jewelry or of plate for our own use or for presents for our friends, we can do real service to what was once a famed industry in Ireland, by buying things of Irish workmanship and made to Irish designs.

In the other branches of art what do we find? Take architecture. In architecture there is practically nothing being done. In other lands it has developed into wonderful things. There are some who hold that the Irish monks were the originators of the stately Gothic style. There is certainly much to be said in favor of this theory. However this may be, specifically Irish architecture has not developed. There is a field for the development of a distinctly Irish school of architecture in Ireland; and possibly, if judicious steps were taken in connection with the erection of new public buildings in this country, much encouragement could be given to our architects, and much stimulus to an Irish Architectural School.

We have in our ancient ruins, whether Irish or Norman, examples sufficient to lay the foundation of an Irish school—of an Irish style. I do not suggest, of course, that we should live in round towers or in fortified houses, or that ancient type of churches would be found suitable to the requirements of our modern congregations. But if our architects proceeded in the spirit of Irish architecture as exemplified in the ruins of Ireland, we would eventually produce an Irish type, as distinctively Irish as the beautiful English country house is English, or the Scotch mansion Scotch; or as what is known as the Colonial style in the United States is distinctively American; or as the stately churches of Italy and Spain reflect the spirit and characteristics of their people.

As to painting and sculpture, the outlook is less hopeful. Both these branches of art require wealth for their cultivation and development, and Ireland is a poor country. The customary patrons of painting and sculpture in other lands from time immemorial have been the aristocracy of those countries. We have no landed aristocracy in Ireland now; they have disappeared from among us. Their disappearance

may be set down to various causes. I attribute it mainly to two causes—First, the overtaxation of the country through the breach of the treaty of the Act of Union, of which they had become the supporters, and secondly, to their fortunate inability to identify themselves with the Nationalist aspirations of their countrymen. Our landed aristocracy has disappeared, or is disappearing, and no mercantile aristocracy has yet arisen to take their place, with the exception of a few men mainly associated with the brewing or distillery industry, of whose claims to be considered patrons of Irish art I have yet to be informed. Consequently, Irish painters and sculptors have no immediate prospect in their own country. Their prospect, however, is not absolutely hopeless.

We have talent. We have had it, at any rate. We have produced sculptors and painters of no mean quality within comparatively recent years. It is true that these men have been mainly driven to utilize their talents abroad. But Ireland has produced them, and Ireland can produce them. The difficulty with Ireland in her present circumstances is to find her artists' opportunity.

I have often thought that possibly a scheme could be devised, perhaps through the medium of our County Councils and our public boards for the encouragement of Irish art. It might be possible, by encouraging our artists to portray important events or great figures in Irish history, to profit themselves, as the results of their labor would certainly profit the country. These are some of the questions to the consideration of which the intelligence of Ireland may profitably devote itself. There are many other questions also, but I will not enlarge upon my subject, much as I am tempted to do so.

Believing, however, as I do in the immense value of institutions such as the Gaelic League, in their power of influencing the minds and cultivating the intelligence of the young men of Ireland, and so fitting them for the better discharge of their duty as citizens, believing, too, in the poetry, the enthusiasm, the patriotism, of the rising generation of Irishmen, in the love of Ireland, and in their reverence for her pathetic past, I earnestly invite my readers to reflect on the circumstances of our Motherland from the standpoint I have presented, so that our priceless intellectual heritage may suffer no diminution and be handed down strengthened, beautiful and increased.



## CHAPTER IV.

### IRISH MUSIC.

*By Reverend Richard Henebry, Ph D*

Our music is an integral part of our civilization. Our old life was interwoven with golden threads of music, ever harmonious with the color scheme of the fabric. There was no feeling of the heart, thought of the brain, or word from the lips but had each its counterpart in song. Where expression failed music became its complement and carried the thought home. Every action and occupation of a lifetime had its accompanying song. If, then, our language enshrines our nationality and must be preserved, our music, that cannot be divorced from it, must be preserved also.

As in the case of our language, but to a far greater extent, the densest ignorance prevails with regard to the real nature of Irish music. A "Feis Ceoil" organized in Dublin for its cultivation has utterly jumped the track and now devotes itself to the study and imitation of classical oratorios, with what success I have not heard. I doubt if a single member of the party had the least suspicion of the true nature of the object they had set themselves to study. And this was in Ireland.

As our language was ousted by a foreign tongue so, also, a foreign music ousted ours. There is some difference in the operation, however. One may learn our own and the foreign language, but the two systems of music are totally irreconcilable.

Of reliable sources of information concerning Irish music I only know four in existence now. They are:

First. The mouths of the people. True Irish music may still be heard from old women singing, boys whistling, and girls lilting or jigging, as we call it.

Second. The music of the Irish bagpipe, whereof the chanter still retains, probably roughly, the Irish scale; also fiddlers who still play in the Irish manner. One who has ever heard it can tell at once when a fiddle speaks with the Irish voice.



Third. The valuable introduction to O'Curry's "Manners and Customs," written by Dr. O'Sullivan, late professor in the Queen's College, Cork. A study of this paper will soon convince anyone that the great and practically the only difference separating Irish and modern music is one of scale. But this is a fundamental difference.

Fourth. The introduction to Bunting's collection of Irish music. Bunting was a person who instituted a contest for Irish harpers in Belfast a little over a hundred years ago. He proceeds from the standpoint of modern music and regards everything not in conformity with it as "imperfect."

However, through his teaching we can reconstruct the system of tuning the harp and glean a good deal of valuable information on the method of playing besides. Unfortunately this book is now excessively rare. It seems a pity when so much useless matter is falling from the press every day, that somebody does not give us the valuable portions of Bunting's book in a magazine or newspaper article. It has been used as a source by O'Sullivan, and so probably the whole substance of it may be consulted at any ordinary library.

Outside of these there are no authorities on Irish music. Moore's melodies and all published collections must be excluded. Everybody who has turned his attention to the matter must notice the great difference in a tone-color between the rendering of an Irish air, let us say one of Moore's, by a modern singer to piano accompaniment and the same air rendered by an old woman in the traditional manner, who is utterly ignorant of modern music. Also the fiddle in the hands of an old, untrained performer, at home speaks Irish, whereas all the art and skill of Herr Joachim could not take a single note out of the same instrument. The reason is that the two musical systems differ fundamentally in scale. The intervals into which the octave is broken to constitute a scale are not coincident and there rise two music schemes that are entirely incommensurable. The theory put forward by O'Sullivan may be consulted in the place already cited. It is too technical for consideration here.

There are fundamental differences in the scale and in the key system. The differences of interval are minute but subtle, they give the peculiar color and character to Irish music. It is evident, therefore, that music composed on one of those scales cannot be played on the other; in other words,

it is impossible to play Irish airs on the modern scale, or upon a modern instrument. It follows, then, that all collections of Irish music written in the modern notation are wrong, though perfect Irish music may be made from them by a bagpiper, or one who plays the fiddle in the Irish way. For the fiddle has a fingerboard that will give infinitesimal variations in tone, according to the stopping position of the finger on the string. On the other hand, the piano has fixed notes, and besides its scale does not exactly coincide either with the Irish or the modern scale. Hence, if one attempts an Irish air on that instrument the characteristic tone-color evaporates immediately and the result is by no means Irish music. This fact is not generally known.

Besides those enumerated already there are in addition differences in phrasing, feeling and technique, or execution. To me there is nothing so wholly discomposing as listening to an Irish air sung with all the saccharine expression of the vaudeville stage to a jangling piano accompaniment. When I compare the wrong tone-scheme, the bad phrasing, the pert, exaggerated, hysterical and false expression with the traditional version of the same air as sung by an old woman, with its full, rich intervals and simple feeling, the veritable voice and refrain of the Gaelic heart, the contrast between modern sham and Celtic truth becomes too poignant for my equanimity.

To preserve Irish music the modern kind must be rigidly excluded; tin whistles, brass bands, concertinas, but especially the do, re, mi, fa of the school-mistress. Let the boys be taught the fiddle from traditional players, though the technique of handling that instrument might be borrowed from the modern style. Especially the Irish bagpipes, which should not be confounded with the Highland bagpipe, must be brought into fashion again and children must be diligently taught to play them according to the pure method. It is a sample of the virulent ignorance that possessed our fathers concerning things that some time ago in the first ecclesiastical seminary which I entered in Ireland, the students were permitted the exercise of every musical instrument with the strict exception of the Irish bagpipes. To meet the call for instruments the making of chanters might be encouraged, and even flutes and fifes could be holed to form the notes of the scale, to the very notable profit of Irish music. Little girls should

be taught to sing as their mothers do, and every boy should be able to whistle correctly quite a collection of Irish tunes.

In another direction all traditional tunes still extant must be collected as soon as possible from the people so that blunders and perversions of previous collectors may be corrected, especially Moore's, and in order that the great body of unpublished music may be snatched from the mouth of the grave. Persons with a good knowledge of the theory of modern music and a scientific grasp of acoustics must go amongst the people and collect the Irish scale or scales, in fact, produce a scientific treatise on our music system, and devise a method of notation. Then, having found our scale, our own do, re, mi, fa, can be taught our children. Perhaps this task may be undertaken by Father Bowerunge, professor of music at Maynooth College.

Lovers of Irish music generally will be surprised and delighted, as I was, to discover that there exists in Chicago a lively activity in this matter, and in the right direction. An influential and numerous body of experts devote their leisure time to the cultivation of traditional Irish music in that city. The happy condition is due to the interests and efforts of Mr. Francis O'Neill, general superintendent of police. Mr. O'Neill is himself an excellent performer on the pipes, and has devoted a lifetime to the collection of Irish music. It mattered not the source, he was ever alert, and can truly give testimony that he has rescued many a melody from lips that were soon afterwards sealed in death.

Amongst the most prized of his great collection is a parcel of about four hundred airs that his mother used to sing. In thus forestalling the undertaker and rescuing those priceless gems from oblivion, Mr. O'Neill has rendered services of incalculable value to the cause of Irish nationhood. For in the new light that has broken upon regenerated Irishmen they regard one shred or fragment of the "jewels of their fathers" as of greater worth than all that vile trumpery that has been imposed upon them during the terrible days of their dark ages, now, thank heaven, passing away.

He has ever been a staunch friend to Irish musicians, and brought to light many an unconsidered custodian of our music who must otherwise lapse into silence for apathy born of the untoward conditions by which they found themselves surrounded. He promoted informal meetings of pipers and

fiddlers at his own house, and encouraged players from all parts of Ireland by his generous patronage, and taught his children to play Irish music in the Irish way.

A foretaste of the fruits of his labors was given at the Auditorium meeting, during the Gaelic League convention of 1901, where 3,000 people were moved to ecstasy at the thrill of their own music. What a rebuke to those of our people who ignorantly deem Irish music vulgar because it is not fashionable. But a full fruition of the pleasure that Chicago players can afford was accorded me by the privilege of an invitation to a piper's meeting held at Mr. O'Neill's. The full assemblage was present and almost every class of music was performed as ever before in Ireland. I was astonished at the wonderful proficiency of the players and the inexhaustible extent of their repertoire. All the reels, the hornpipes and doubles I had learned to fiddle as a boy, together with all the airs I had learned from my mother, were there, and a thousand others.

I wish to say that I know nothing in art so grand, so thrilling as the irresistible vigor and mighty onrush of some reels they played, filled with the hurry of flight, the majesty of battle-strife, the languishment of retreat, the sweep of a rallying charge with a laugh at fate, though yet the whole was ever still accompanied by the complaining magic of a minor tone like the whisper of a far-away sorrow. Truly, a good reel records the heart throbs of our fathers and the wind that ruffled those dark and hidden waters, the soul of the Gael. And some of the older song-airs revealed with sob and sigh a kind of secret that may not be spoken for very fear. And those—the untutored Irish account vulgar!

Then Roger O'Neill and Tom Ennis, two little boys, played the fiddle in the Irish manner. This affords proof that Irish music has vigor, has enough root in Chicago to propagate itself. I have heard very much of the music of Ireland, and heard it often, but never yet better than that played by the Chicago pipers and fiddlers at Mr. O'Neill's.



## CHAPTER V.

### A SURVEY OF CELTIC PHILOLOGY.

*By Professor Kuno Meyer, Ph D*

A rapid and brief survey of the work at present being carried on in the domain of Celtic philology—philology both in its English and continental sense—will, I hope, be deemed sufficiently interesting to engage for half an hour or so the attention of my readers. It will, if it does nothing else, show you the extent of the field of research and the number and variety of workers. My chief difficulty in treating so large a subject thus briefly is, next to the unavoidable dryness of enumeration, one of limitation and selection, and I shall have to confine myself to an account of works quite recently published or still in hand, and mainly, though not exclusively, to the chief representatives of the Celtic speech—Irish and Welsh.

What my sketch thus loses in breadth and fullness it will gain in “actuality,” to borrow a French word

In the language of our mechanical age I will take a series of snapshots at Celtic scholars all the world over as I find them engaged at their work.

It may be said without exaggeration and without fear of contradiction, that at no time have Celtic studies been in a more flourishing condition than they are at the present moment. The number of students, both native and foreign, has for several years been rapidly and constantly increasing. It is easier for the beginner now than it used to be, to get a good training and to lay a thorough foundation for independent research. The output of scholarly works in all departments—much of it of first-rate importance—has grown so much that already it is no easy matter to keep abreast of the latest research.

Students of Aryan philology are finding out that a knowledge of the Celtic languages is to them as important as that of the other great branches of the Indo-European family.

Lastly, the interest of the general public in Celtic investigation and its results is widening and deepening. It may



be said that the public at large is at last beginning to realize that there is such a thing as a large and ancient and important literature in Irish and Welsh of which a mere fraction only has hitherto been published, that there is here a vast field of research waiting for workers, that for the history of mediæval literature, for the history of these islands, for the history of early western Christianity—that literature is of the utmost value and importance, that indeed such histories cannot be written until all the material that this literature furnishes are before them in critical editions.

It is, perhaps, considerations of this kind that have weighed with the university authorities in Prussia in their recent decision to establish at Berlin the first German Chair of Celtic philology and literature. This is a step forward which all Celtic students should hail with acclamation, all the more as one of the leading scholars of Germany, long well-known wherever there are serious Celtic students, has been called to fill it—Professor H. Zimmer, hitherto of Griefswald.

This augurs well for the future of our studies, for there is no more active, no more devoted student of everything connected with the Celt, or one of whom his pupils speak with greater admiration, than Professor Zimmer, and so we may soon hope to see a flourishing school of Celtic philology rising at Berlin.

Would that Ireland were to follow suit by establishing at Trinity College or at the new Catholic University, soon, I hope, to become a reality, or at both, a Celtic Chair for the encouragement of these studies among professed students.

Another welcome sign of the spread of Celtic studies has been the foundation and success by the side of her elder sister, the "*Revue Celtique*," of a second continental periodical, entirely devoted to Celtic lore, the "*Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie*." It was the intention of its founders that this should be a truly international periodical, and their expectations have been amply fulfilled. Not to speak of the numbers already published, I may mention, in order to show the widely representative character of its contributions and contributors, that the forthcoming number will contain among other things an attempt to interpret a Gaulish inscription by a young Celtic student of Christiania, a pupil of Professor Sophus Bugge; a study of Welsh metrics and the laws of

*cyngthaneidd* by Professor Morris Jones, of Bangor; the phonetic description of a Scotch-Gaelic dialect by a native scholar, Dr. Henderson; an investigation into the language of the old Irish glosses of Milan, by Professor Strachan; Breton etymologies, by Professor Loth, and so on.

To complete my survey of what is being done in Germany at present, I may mention that Dr. Holder is gradually approaching the end of his Thesaurus of the Gaulish and early British vocabulary; that Professor Windisch is engaged on a second edition of his Irish grammar; a comprehensive edition and translation of that most important Irish historical tale, *the Tam Bo Cuailgne*, which will appear under the auspices and at the expense of the Royal Saxon Society of Science, that Professor Zimmer has just published a short but important article on the ancient Celtic church, in which he deals in his usual clear and incisive way with the many difficult problems connected with that subject, the first coming of Christianity to these islands and its early history

He states once more his well-known views as to St. Patrick and his belief that he and Palladius were one and the same person. Zimmer has also started a grammatical discussion of vital importance for the history of the Irish language, a discussion centering around the use and function of the little verbal participle or preposition *io*, in which Professor Thurneyson, of Freiburg, and Professor Strachan, of Manchester, have taken part.

These and similar investigations will ultimately prove of the most far-reaching result, as they will enable us to date more accurately the remains of early Irish literature

Dr. Finck, of Marburg, the well-known author of a grammar and dictionary of the Aran dialect, and his sister, Miss Finck, have completed an exhaustive glossary to the eighteenth century classic, "Donlevy," which under the name of "Contributions to Irish Lexicography," I have begun a middle and Early-Irish dictionary which is now advanced to the letter C. Both these works are appearing in a periodical entirely devoted to the Celtic lexicography

Professor Stern, of Berlin, continues his researches into the language and literature of his two favorite branches of Celtic speech, Welsh and Scotch-Gaelic, or Albano-Gaelic, as he prefers to call it. It is a great pity that for want of support his projected new edition of the oldest Scotch col-

lection of poetry, the "Book of the Dean of Lismore," will not, I am afraid, see the light of day.

There are quite a number of young scholars in Germany now devoting attention to Celtic studies and advancing them by their own researches mainly on philological lines, among whom I will mention Drs. Zupitza, Foy and Summer. But what is perhaps the most hopeful sign is the spread of Celtic studies during the last few years to Scandinavia, to Denmark, Sweden and Norway, where several brilliant young scholars have by their work in Irish grammar at once taken their places among the foremost rank of Celtic scholars. I refer to Professor Holger Pedersen, a pupil of Zimmer's, to Dr. Sarauw, of Copenhagen, and Dr. Liden, of Gotenburg. Though by the general reader such purely grammatical work can hardly be appreciated, it is work like theirs that really lays the foundation for much, I had almost said, for everything else.

As Whitley Stokes once said: "We must thresh and winnow before we reap," and I may add that if in threshing our flails sometimes hit a fellow-worker somewhat harshly and make him cry out, that is part of the game. Each one receives and deals his blows in turn.

In France, as is natural, the attention of Celtic scholars turns mainly on the investigation of Gaulish remains and the language and literature of Brittany. The discovery of the inscription of Coligny has lately set many pens in motion. Through the exertions of French and Breton scholars the dialects of Brittany are better studied and more fully described than any other branch of living Celtic speech.

But French scholars do not neglect Irish or Welsh. Indeed Professor Loth, of Rennes, has lately been doing work which we should more naturally expect from native Welsh scholars. His translations of the *Mabinogion* is a great advance on Lady Guest's bowdlerized version, his book on Welsh metrics is a comprehensive treatment of a very difficult subject, but will be largely corrected and supplemented by Professor Morris Jones, himself next to the venerable Archdruid, one of the foremost masters of *cynghanedd* in Wales. Lastly, French scholars have lately been very active in working at that most complicated of all Celtic problems, the Arthurian legend and its probable Celtic origins, an activity which is mainly due to the impulse given to these

studies by Professor Zimmer's epoch-making investigations.

Among the ranks of native Breton scholars the death of M. de la Borderie leaves a breach not easily filled. Fortunately, he had completed, before his death, the third volume of his great history of Brittany, which brings the history of that country down to the fourteenth century.

I must not leave the continent without referring to Italy's contributions to Celtic research. Count Nigra has indeed never followed up his promising early work on the Old Irish glosses, but Professor Ascoli is still continuing to work on his monumental edition of the Milan and St. Gall glosses and the Old Irish glossary accompanying it.

Passing now in my review to Great Britain and Ireland, I rejoice to be able to record a great activity on almost all sides. In Wales and Ireland especially, owing no doubt to the activity of the various societies for the preservation and cultivation of the national language, the number of well-equipped students is steadily increasing, and work, surpassing in many respects that of the older generation of native scholars is being published.

In his island home at Cowes, Whitley Stokes, the doyen of Celtic scholars, continues his life's work indefatigably and with unabated vigor. Among the many and varied works by which he has lately enriched our knowledge of early Irish literature I will mention his edition of the "Annals of Tigernach," of the "Amra Colum Cille," and a complete edition of the largest Fenian, or Ossianic tale, the "Agallanib na Senorach." His edition and translation of the "Bruiden Da Derga," now publishing in the *Revue Celtique*, next to his "Death of Cuchulinn," is, in my opinion, the finest rendering of an ancient Irish tale that has yet been achieved.

In conjunction with Professor Strachan, Dr. Stokes is also engaged on a Thesaurus of all Old Irish glosses, interlinear versions and other pieces of prose and poetry, the first volume of which is soon to be published by the Cambridge University Press. At the same press, Standish Hayes O'Grady, most learned of all native Irish scholars, will soon, I hope, bring out his long-promised edition of the "Cathreim Toirdhealbhaigh," and of that curious version of Lucan's Pharsalia known as the "Cath Cahtarda." Would that he might also continue the catalogue of the Irish MSS. in the British Museum, the first part of which I am glad to hear can



now be bought. It is, as I have had occasion before to say, not only the first reliable printed catalogue of any large collection of Irish MSS., but the editor's fine translations and curious notes make it one of the most important as well as most delightful Irish books ever published—nor is there any scholar living now who can interpret for us the style and the spirit of bardic poetry in so masterly a manner. Speaking of catalogues, I may here mention a rumor which I hope is true, that the Irish Parliamentary Party is, next session, going to ask the government for a grant towards cataloguing Irish MSS. If the result of such action would be anything like what has lately been done for Welsh MSS. by the indefatigable labors of Gwenogfryn Evans, Irish students will have reason to congratulate themselves. Dr. Norman Moore, the translator of Windisch's grammar, has completed his gallery of biographies of Irish Saints and Kings in the "Dictionary of National Biography." I myself have lately drawn to light a number of Early Irish poems, a "Dirge of Niall of the Nine Hostages," the "Song of the Cailleach Beirre," the "Song of the Sea," wrongly ascribed to the celebrated poet Rumann; the "Song of Carroll's Sword," a fine specimen of court-poetry and a spirited nature-poem which I call "King and Hermit." Most of these poems have come down to us in comparatively late MSS. only, but on the evidence of the language we are justified in assigning to them a far earlier origin. Professors Atkinson and Bernard have brought out a new edition of the "Liber Hymnorum." From the former, the fifth volume of the Brehon Laws, now considerably overdue, is eagerly awaited. The Irish Texts Society has added a third volume to its series in the poems of Egan O'Rahilly, admirably edited by the Rev. P. S. Dineen, from whom, I hear, we may soon expect an edition of the poetry of Owen Roe O'Sullivan.

The Gaelic League has also started an Irish Text Series, beginning with a volume of "Keating's Poems," edited by Rev. J. C. McErlean, which I hope they will soon follow up with collections of the works of other bards.

From Mr. John McNeill we are soon, I hear, to have an edition of the so-called "Duanaire Finn," a collection of Ossianic poems.

Since Professor Zimmer redirected attention to the important part played by the Norse invaders in the history,



language and literature of Ireland, contributions to our knowledge of this period have come from various quarters. I refer to the study of Irish-Norse relations, by Professor Sophus Bugge, Dr. Craigie, of Oxford, and Miss Faraday, and may be allowed to mention that Dr. Alexander Bugge has come to Dublin to further work this field at the record office, and in the Royal Irish Academy, where he is sure to find much unpublished material. It gives me particular pleasure to announce that a pupil of mine, Richard O'Donovan, a son of the late Dr. John O'Donovan, is going to supplement his father's edition of the "Annals of the Four Masters" by a much-needed Index Rerum.

Mr. Gwynne has boldly tackled the difficult "Dinsenchas" poems, which he has chosen for his subject. From his father, Professor Gwynne, we may expect an edition of the "Book of Armagh."

Mr. Douglas Hyde has been the first since the days of O'Reilly to attempt a literary history of Ireland, and he continues his series of *misgeula* of which the third part has lately appeared. Dr. Hogan has brought out a most useful Irish herbal under the title of "Lubbhleabhran," and is, I hear, engaged on an Irish Onomartican, or "Thesaurus of Place-names," which will be a great boon to students.

In the United States, Celtic studies are beginning to take root. The Rev. Professor Heuebry has begun printing and translating O'Donnell's "Life of St Colum Cille." Professor Robinson, of Harvard, has collected the Early Irish sagas and poems, bearing on Chaucer's tale of the "Wife of Bath," which he will publish in the Grimm Library. The same scholar is engaged on an edition of the Middle-Irish versions of the "Sir Bevis of Hampton."

Of all Celtic countries, Scotland, for some reason, contributes least to Celtic research. The valuable collection of Gaelic MSS. at the Advocate's Library still remains uncatalogued and unpublished.

If it were not for that indefatigable worker, Dr. Alexander Macbain, and the Gaelic Society of Inverness, very little progress would have to be recorded, and yet there is nowhere apparently so much general interest taken in all questions bearing on the early history of that country as in Scotland. Macbain's "Gaelic Etymological Dictionary" is already out of print, and a new improved and enlarged edition may be

expected; meanwhile, the only valuable contribution to our knowledge of the literature of Gaelic Scotland which has lately appeared is Mr. Carmichael's "*Carmina Gadelica*," a large collection of native folk-lore of the most varied and surprising interest, of which not only Celtic students, but Teutonic also will have to take account. Where there was so much, is sure to be much more, and it is to be hoped that these dying traditions will be rescued before it is too late.

The smallest Celtic land, the Isle of Man, puts Scotland to shame by the activity of its scholars. To mention only the chief event of the year, Mr. A. W. Moore has brought out a comprehensive history of the island, from which it appears that the pre-Norse history of the island has not yet been worked out from Irish sources, which still contain a good deal of unpublished material on early events in that island.

Mr. Kermore may, I hear, be soon expected to publish a revised and enlarged edition of his "*Manx Runic and Ogam Inscriptions* "

In Wales, the self-inflicted death of Charles Ashton, the literary policeman of Dinas Mawddwy, has been a severe blow to Welsh scholarship. His "*History of Welsh Literature*" and his edition of the works of Iolo Goch remain as a remarkable monument to the erudition of a man who was entirely self-taught.

Professor Lewis Jones, of Bangor, under the title of *Canadian Cymru*, has published an anthology of Welsh poetry of the last two centuries, from "*Haw Morus*" to "*Ceiriog Hughes*," while his colleague and namesake, Morris Jones, has produced a fine edition of Ellis Wynne's "*Bardd Cwsg*." Professor Anwyl, of Aberystwyth, has published the most scholarly "*Grammar of Welsh*," and continues his researches into the origin and structure of the Mabinogion. A society has been formed in Cardiff, under the name of *Cymdeithas Llen Cymru*, for the publication of the works of less-known poets. Two little volumes, daintily got up, have already appeared. Canon Silvan Evans, the veteran of the Welsh philology, in spite of his eighty-five years, continues to work at his "*Welsh-English Dictionary*," of which we may soon expect a new installment. Professor Rhys, in co-operation with Mr. Brynmor Jones, under the title of the "*Welsh People*," has brought out a volume full of the most varied information, but one regrets to find it in a paper by Morri

Jones, on linguistic relations between the Welsh and certain North African peoples. Professor Rhys has also collected his scattered articles on Welsh folk-lore into two large volumes. It is surprising to see how little folk-lore there is left in Wales.

I am now at the end of my rapid sketch. Having given you, I hope, a picture of a remarkable display of activity all along the line, I should now like to point out that two great needs in Irish studies still remain unsupplied—a Dictionary and a Reader. There are, or were, rumors of a forthcoming dictionary from more than one side, but there seems no immediate prospect of their realization.

Let me entreat those who have made lexicographical collections of whatever kind to follow my example, and publish them boldly, incomplete or incoherent as they may be. In lexicographical work nothing that adds the least to our knowledge can come amiss.

It has been one of the curses of Celtic studies that so much valuable work of this kind has been lost, and has to be done over again by another generation, perhaps not so well equipped for the task. There are, e. g., to mention only one deplorable fact, at Maynooth, two huge folio volumes, the MSS. dictionary of O'Curry, inaccessible to almost all Irish students, which, if it had been printed, like O'Donovan's well-known supplement to O'Reilly, would have proved an incalculable boon, and would have materially advanced our studies.

The compilation of an Irish dictionary on the scale of the great standard dictionaries of other more fortunate languages is a task beyond the powers of this generation. That cannot be undertaken till the great bulk of Irish literature is available in trustworthy edition.

As regards the Reader, such a work might far more easily be undertaken now, and the benefit it would convey on the beginner would be very great.

It should contain a well-chosen series of ancient and modern texts in normalized spelling, so as not to deter the beginner by the infinite vagaries of the scribes, and it should be accompanied by a glossary.

In Welsh, too, a publication of this kind would be most desirable. Nothing would so much popularize Celtic studies as the appearance of such books. Meanwhile the "Gaelic Journal" and the "An Claidheamh Solius" might do much

by giving us still more modern texts from such collections as that at Maynooth, where on a cursory inspection, I was astonished to find volume after volume of the most excellent modern or comparatively modern prose, such as one of the "Gesta Romanorum," etc.

I cannot conclude without casting a glance into the future. I am convinced that the present is but the beginning of an era of still greater activity in all departments of Celtic studies. Everything points to that.

The more reliable textbooks and handbooks will be published, the greater will be the numbers of those taking up Celtic studies. As the fields of other more ancient and more recognized studies become exhausted, there will come a rush of students on to the fresh, and often, almost virgin soil of Celtic research, to study the great Celtic civilization at its source, to collect the last lingering remnants of a mighty tradition.

Again and again it has happened during recent years that workers in other subjects have in their researches finally been led on to Celtic soil, where lie the roots of much mediæval lore, of many institutions, of important phases of thought.

And another thing, too, I will foretell. The rediscovery, as it were, of ancient Celtic literature will not only arouse abroad a greater interest in the Celtic nations, but it will lead to beneficial results among those nations themselves. All that is needed is to overcome indifference and ignorance.

I have never yet known the Irishman or Irishwoman who were not in heart of hearts proud of their beautiful native land, and loved it with a far-brought love, a love out of the storied past; who were not proud of their men and women; who did not think of them as every patriot ought the best and noblest and fairest in the world. From that love will spring a wider and a greater Ireland, than an Ireland of party and faction. I do not despair that even Professor Mahaffy, whose brilliant wit and ready satire too often give the lie to his true Irish heart, will be a contented citizen of that greater Ireland, and that a time will come when he and men like him will be proud of that precious inheritance of their nation, their great and noble literature, which is the envy of other nations, and in which, with its history, its poetry and all its associations, a basis of union will be found for all Irishmen of whatever race and creed.

It has been so in Scotland, where Walter Scott, and Burns; aye, and the much-abused Macpherson, and the songs of the Highlands, the ballads of the Lowlands, coupled with the love of the native land, have been more potent to bring about a reconciliation and a union of hearts and hands than the heavy and multiplex and blundering apparatus of politics. And to a similar union, based on an ideal and lasting sentiment, we may confidently look forward for Ireland, who shall then once more take that proud and honored place among the nations of the world which is hers by right, and of which blind, cruel and unreasoning fate has so long deprived her.



Composed from Book of Kells.



## CHAPTER VI.

### IRISH MANUSCRIPT LITERATURE

*By T. O'Neil Russell*

The fact of the general interest awakened by Irish, or, to speak more correctly, Gaelic literature is a hopeful sign for the Irish race at home and abroad. This interest has been steadily growing for more than forty years, and owes its origin in a great measure to the talent, research and unceasing labors of Dr. John O'Donovan.

Before his time nothing, or next to nothing, was known about the contents of the massive tomes and musty, leathern-looking rolls of manuscript that were thrust into out-of-the-way nooks in the libraries of Trinity College, the Royal Irish Academy and many other places. The writer remembers the feelings of surprise, mingled with a good deal of incredulity, with which the first of Mr. O'Donovan's translations was received by the public.

It appeared in the *Dublin Penny Journal*, and was supposed, with very good show of probability, to have been the composition of Cormac, Chief King of Ireland in the third century. It was entitled "Advice to a Prince." It is one of the most interesting and curious pieces that has yet been translated from Gaelic, indeed, it is so excellent, and shows such a high morality and culture on the part of its author, that a very large proportion of the readers of the *Dublin Penny Journal* unhesitatingly set it down as a forgery, and classed it in the same category as MacPherson's "Ossian." There were so few then alive who knew anything about Old Gaelic that it was next to impossible to prove whether O'Donovan's translation was correct or not, although he gave the name of the manuscript from which it was taken. O'Donovan, however, was not a man to be discouraged by the remarks of prejudiced or ignorant people. He went on making translations, and although the masses took little or no interest in them, some of the learned were impressed with their beauty.

Never had any kind of literature to make its way to public esteem through such difficulties as the books translated by

O'Donovan. Very few Irishmen took any interest in them, and it is safe to say that no Englishman had any regard for them whatever.

The reviews and criticisms of the *Athenaeum* and the *Saturday Review*, and such of the English press as deigned to notice them, were the most curious compounds of ignorance, bad taste and prejudice possible to conceive. Here were translations from the oldest class of manuscripts in Europe, and one would suppose that great cosmopolitan literary London would have gone half wild with delight over the quaintness, originality, and unmistakable antiquity of such curious and beautiful pieces as the "Book of Rights," the "Battle of Magh Rath," the "Circuit of Ireland," by Muirceartach MacNeill; the "Topographical Poems of O'Heerin and O'Dugan," "St. Patrick's Hymn at Tara," etc.

Had translations of equal merit been made from any other language under heaven, had the treasures of any other literature that had lain hidden for a thousand years, suddenly been poured on the London literary world, as O'Donovan's translations were, the whole tribe of scribblers would have set to work to write reviews and treatises on them, and the translator would have made a pile of money. But the fact was that the translations fell dead from the press; the Irish public did not buy them, and English reviewers and *litterateurs* sneered at them and O'Donovan made no money except the small pittance allowed him by the Royal Irish Academy.

By degrees, however, slowly but surely, a widespread and general interest began to be awakened about Irish literature. In one quarter it began to be thoroughly appreciated, and that was in Germany. Very soon the learned of that country, free, as a class, from political prejudices as they undoubtedly are, turned their attention to the study of the ancient language and lore of Erin. Zeuss was first amongst the Germans to go seriously to work to study Celtic. Stimulated by the great achievements of O'Donovan, and having plenty of Irish manuscripts of great antiquity in the libraries of his own and adjoining countries, he, after thirteen years' hard work, produced the celebrated "*Grammatica Celtica*," which treats of the kindred languages to Gaelic as well as of Gaelic itself; that is, it contains a grammar of Welsh, Breton and the dead dialect of Cornwall.

The example shown by Zeuss was followed by many in

Germany, and a host of Celtic scholars sprung up in that country; amongst whom the names of Bopp, Ebel, Grimm, Zimmer, Windisch, and Zimmerman are best known. France, too, contributed some excellent Celtic savants, foremost among them we may mention the name of H. D'Arbois de Jubainville, editor of the *Revue Celtique*.

With the single exception of Dr. Atkinson, professor of Sanskrit in Trinity College, Dublin, England has not up to this time produced a single Celtic scholar. Dr. Atkinson's training in Celtic is from Ireland. The only English author that has taken any notice whatever of Gaelic literature is Matthew Arnold. His noble work, "Celtic Literature," stamps him not only as a scholar, but the most un-English of Englishmen, inasmuch as he is not prejudiced, and is ready to acknowledge merit wherever he finds it, even though it be in the ancient literature of Ireland.

There are, however, within the borders of England at the present time some of the best, if not the best, Celtic scholars in the world. Foremost we will mention Dr. Whitley Stokes, of London; Dr. Standish Hayes O'Grady and Professor Kuno Meyer. Dr. Meyer is connected with the University College, Liverpool, and although a German, is a most distinguished Celtic scholar.

Amidst all the gloom and discouragement which surrounded the early labors of O'Donovan and his fellow worker O'Curry, in spite of the lamentable fact that even their own countrymen did not fully appreciate their labors, there is one thing connected with the revival of Irish literature for which Irishmen have just reason to feel proud. There is one institution in Ireland without which the early literature of our country would probably be as little known to-day as it was a hundred years ago. That institution is the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

It was mostly from its slender funds that O'Donovan was remunerated for his gigantic labors; it is there most of the priceless treasures of the art and literature of Ireland's ancient days of freedom and culture have found a safe and honored resting-place. It is the most hallowed spot on Irish soil. Its Museum of Antiquities is the most unique, the most interesting, and, for its size, the most valuable in the world.

There are to be seen treasures in gold ornamentation, of workmanship infinitely superior to anything at the present

day. Among them the Tara Brooch, the "Chalice of Ardagh" and the "Cross of Cong" are the most remarkable. It is there also that the most noted and ancient manuscripts are deposited. "The Book of Armagh," the "Book of Leinster," the "Book of Lecain," the "Speckled Book," the "Book of Fermoy," and many other priceless tomes are all in the keeping of this institution. Too great praise cannot be given the members of the Royal Irish Academy for their genuine zeal, patriotism and liberality.

The institution was founded by Protestant gentlemen over a hundred years ago, but it never in the slightest degree partook of a sectarian character. Catholic members were willingly received, and now fully half its members are Catholics. It was, in fact, solely through the means of the Irish Academy that the treasures of ancient Irish literature were brought under the notice of the world. O'Donovan might have been a genius, but if there were no institution to take advantage of his genius, or set it to work, and, above all, to pay for it, Celtic manuscripts would probably be as little known or cared about to-day as they were when the institution was founded.

The Royal Irish Academy has performed one most important work, and that is the copying or making fac-similes of some of the most ancient and valuable Irish manuscripts. The "Leabhar na h-Uidhre," or "Book of the Dun Cow," the "Book of Ballymote," the "Book of Leinster," the "Leabhar Breac" and the "Book of Lecain"—some of these tomes contain more matter than the Bible. Several hundred copies of each have been printed off, and they are so faithful copies that even the mistakes of the originals are reproduced. The work of copying is one that requires great skill, time and patience.

The importance of this work can hardly be overestimated, as the slightest accident from fire might at any time cause the loss of these treasures of ancient Irish learning.

When we consider the quantity of ancient Irish manuscripts that yet exists, and the immense number that must have been destroyed by Danes, Normans and Cromwellians, we feel astonished at the literary activity of ancient Ireland. It is safe to say that there are more untranslated Irish manuscripts of the Middle Ages yet extant than there are in all the other European languages put together.

There are over one thousand volumes of untranslated



matter in Dublin, some of them as old as the eighth and ninth centuries; there are many hundred volumes in the different libraries in England, the quantity on the Continent is very large, the exact number is not known; Irish manuscripts are known to exist in many of the old towns of France, Germany, the Low Countries, Italy, and perhaps also Spain; in fact, in most places on the Continent where monastic institutions existed in the middle ages.

It is a great pity that some steps are not taken to collect, and, if possible, to purchase those venerable relics of the past. The British Government is in duty bound to do it. If Ireland were mistress of her own destinies there is no doubt but it would be done.

England has undertaken the government of Ireland, has put herself in the place of Ireland, and is in duty bound to do her best to preserve the ancient records and literature of the country she has conquered. Besides, the treasures of the past are in a great measure the property of humanity. Englishmen, Frenchmen and Germans are alike interested in preserving the antiquities of Greece, Egypt and Assyria, and why should not the antiquities of Ireland be equally precious?

If Saxon manuscripts were known to exist in the same abundance in Continental libraries as Irish manuscripts, England would spend hundreds of thousands of pounds in purchasing them. Private enterprise can never accomplish such a work, for the simple reason that the expense would be too great. The Royal Irish Academy would undoubtedly have taken some steps ere now to purchase as many as possible of the Irish manuscripts on the Continent if its funds were large enough. It is to be hoped that something will soon be done in this matter, either by public or private enterprise.

Unfortunate as Ireland has been politically, she has been still more unfortunate in respect to her literature and language. The wars of the seventeenth century were more destructive to her literature than to her liberty, for fire and sword are powerless against the one, but potent against the other. The spirit of liberty may laugh at the incendiary soldier, but the books he burns are lost forever.

The early and mediæval literature of Ireland sustained more losses through wars and burnings than the literature of any other nation in the world. What the Danes spared the



Normans destroyed, and what escaped them were burned by the Cromwellians. Even the eighteenth century, comparatively peaceful as it was for Ireland, was the time when as cruel a blow as ever was dealt fell on Celtic literature, and was dealt by James Macpherson and his coadjutors.

The publication of the so-called poems of Ossian, in spite of the temporary excitement they created, invested everything Celtic with a stigma of forgery and falsity. The people who had been deceived by Macpherson determined never to be deceived again by anything Celtic.

Here we have the principal cause of the indifference and coldness with which O'Donovan's translations were received by the public. But Macpherson and his coadjutors were guilty of a still greater crime than forgery of historical characters and distortion of historical facts; they went further than any literary charlatans ever went before, for they forged a language.

It is now well known that the language of modern Scotch Gaelic first appeared about the middle of the last century; previous to that time whatever books or manuscripts existed in Gaelic in Scotland, whether written in old Gaelic characters or in Roman, agreed with the language of Ireland in orthography and syntax. It may be admitted that the Highlanders had some peculiarities of pronunciation that differed from those of Ireland, but the written language was the same as ours.

This is abundantly proved by "Carswell's Liturgy," and many other existing books of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. To this day the language of the poorest and least educated Highlander is more like Irish than the jargon into which the Bible has been translated for him. It can be easily understood how much Gaelic literature has suffered by having the Scotch cut themselves off from the Irish in the manner described. Had the Gaelic language been preserved in its purity in Scotland the probability is that Celtic would be to-day a well known and fashionable speech, for the literary activity of Scotland would have brought it prominently under the notice of the world. Scotland could have done this better than Ireland, for Ireland was, all through the eighteenth century, in a state of political and religious turmoil that rendered literary effort of any kind impossible.

Another cause of the ignorance and coldness about Irish literature is the unfortunate fact that the editors and writers of Irish newspapers are, and have been as a class, utterly ignorant about the ancient language and literature of their country. They would find room for the worthless utterance of some demagogue, when they would grudge a short paragraph on one of O'Donovan's or O'Curry's wonderful translations. I can think of but one man connected with a paper or periodical in Ireland until within ten or twelve years that published even one column of original matter in the language of our country. This is enough to make any one with the smallest pretensions to patriotism blush alike for his country and countrymen.

Whether the present widespread desire amongst the Irish at home and abroad to become familiar with their native language and literature will continue or not is hard to say, but if it lasts only a few years longer it will have accomplished enough to insure the language a lengthened existence, for in a short time there will be enough people able to read it to insure a remunerative sale for a current literature in Irish. Five years from now, with the language taught in the national schools, there will be such a general knowledge of it that we may see newspapers and periodicals printed entirely in Gaelic instead of partially as at present.



SECTION VIII.

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GREAT SPEECHES ON GREAT  
OCCASIONS

SPARKLING GEMS FROM THE JEWEL HOUSE  
OF IRELAND'S UNRIVALED ORATORY

BY

ROBERT EMMET, THOMAS FRANCIS MEAGHER, A. M. SULLIVAN,  
CHARLES STEWART PARNELL, THOMAS SEXTON, REV.  
DR. CHARLES O'REILLY, W. BOURKE COCKRAN,  
JOHN F. FINERTY





## GREAT SPEECHES ON GREAT OCCASIONS

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EMMETT'S SPEECH IN THE DOCK SEPTEMBER 19TH, 1803.

"My Lords:—I am asked what have I to say why sentence of death should not be pronounced on me, according to law. I have nothing to say that can alter your predetermination, nor that it will become me to say, with any view to the mitigation of that sentence which you are to pronounce, and by which I must abide. But I have that to say which interests me more than life, and which you have labored to destroy. I have much to say why my reputation should be rescued from the load of false accusation and calumny which has been cast upon it. I do not imagine that, seated where you are, your minds can be so free from prejudice as to receive the least impression from what I am going to utter. I have no hopes that I can anchor my character in the breast of a court constituted and trammelled as this is. I only wish, and that is the utmost that I expect, that your lordships may suffer it to float down your memories untainted by the foul breath of prejudice, until it finds some more hospitable harbor to shelter it from the storms by which it is at present buffeted. Were I only to suffer death, after being adjudged guilty by your tribunal, I should bow in silence and meet the fate that awaits me without a murmur, but the sentence of the law which delivers my body to the executioner will, through the ministry of the law, labor for its own vindication, to consign my character to obloquy, for there must be guilt somewhere, whether in the sentence of the court or in the catastrophe, time must determine. A man in my situation has not only to encounter the difficulties of fortune, and the force of power over minds which it has corrupted or subjugated, but the difficulties of established prejudice. The man dies, but his memory lives. That mine may not perish, that it may live in the respect of my countrymen, I seize upon this opportunity to vindicate myself from some of the charges alleged against me. When my spirit shall be wafted to a more friendly port—when my shade shall have joined the bands of those martyred heroes who have shed their blood on the scaffold and in the field in defense of their country, and of virtue—this my hope—I wish that my memory and name may animate those who survive me, while I look down with complacency on the destruction of that perfidious government which upholds its domination by blasphemy of the Most High—which displays its power over man, as over the beasts of the forest—which sets man upon his brother, and lifts his hand in the name of God, against the throat of his fellow who believes or doubts a little more or a little less than the government standard—a government which is steeled to barbarity by the cries of the orphans, and the tears of the widows it has made."

(At this point Mr. Emmett was interrupted by Lord Norbury,

who said "That the mean and wicked enthusiasts who felt as he did were not equal to the accomplishment of their wild designs")

"I appeal to the immaculate God—I swear by the throne of Heaven before which I must shortly appear—by the blood of the murdered patriots who have gone before me—that my conduct has been, through all this peril, and through all my purposes, governed only by the conviction which I have uttered, and by no other view than that of the emancipation of my country from the superhuman oppression under which she has so long and too patiently travailed, and I confidently hope that, wild and chimerical as it may appear, there is still union and strength in Ireland to accomplish this noblest of enterprises. Of this I speak with the confidence of intimate knowledge and with the consolation that appertains to that confidence. Think not, my lords, I say this for the petty gratification of giving you a transitory uneasiness. A man who never yet raised his voice to assert a lie will not hazard his character with posterity by asserting a falsehood on a subject so important to his country, and on an occasion like this. Yes, my lords, a man who does not wish to have his epitaph written until his country is liberated will not leave a weapon in the power of envy, or a pretence to impeach the probity which he means to preserve, even in the grave to which tyranny consigns him."

(Here he was again interrupted by the court.)

"Again, I say, that what I have spoken was not intended for your lordship, whose situation I commiserate rather than envy—my expressions were for my countrymen. If there is a true Irishman present, let my last words cheer him in the hour of his affliction."

(Here he was again interrupted. Lord Norbury said he did not sit there to hear treason.)

"I have always understood it to be the duty of a judge, when a prisoner has been convicted, to pronounce the sentence of the law. I have also understood that judges sometimes think it their duty to hear with patience and to speak with humanity, to exhort the victim of the laws, and to offer with tender benignity their opinions of the motives by which he was actuated in the crime of which he was adjudged guilty. That a judge has thought it his duty so to have done I have no doubt, but where is the boasted freedom of your institutions—where is the vaunted impartiality, clemency, and mildness of your courts of justice, if an unfortunate prisoner, whom your policy and not justice is about to deliver into the hands of the executioner, is not suffered to explain his motives sincerely and truly, and to vindicate the principles by which he was actuated? My lords, it may be part of the system of angry justice to bow a man's mind by humiliation to the proposed ignominy of the scaffold, but worse to me than the purposed shame of the scaffold's terrors would be the shame of such foul and unfounded imputations as have been made against me in this court. You, my lord, are a judge, I am the supposed culprit. I am a man, you are a man, also. By a revolution of power we might change places, though we never could change characters. If I stand at the bar of this court and dare not vindicate my character, what a farce is your justice! If I stand at this bar, and dare not vindicate my character, how dare you calumniate it? Does the sentence of death, which your unhallowed policy inflicts on my body, condemn my tongue to silence and my reputation to reproach? Your

executioners may abridge the period of my existence; but while I exist I shall not forbear to vindicate my character and motives from your aspersions; and as a man, to whom fame is dearer than life, I will make the last use of that life in doing justice to that reputation which is to live after me, and which is the only legacy I can leave to those I honor and love, and for whom I am proud to perish. As men, my lords, we must appear on the great day at one common tribunal, and it will then remain for the Searcher of all hearts to show a collective universe, who was engaged in the most virtuous actions, or swayed by the purest motives—my country's oppressors or"—(Here he was interrupted and told of the sentence of the law.)

"My lords, will a dying man be denied the legal privilege of exculpating himself in the eyes of the community from an undeserved reproach, thrown upon him during his trial, by charging him with ambition and attempting to cast away for a paltry consideration the liberties of his country? Why did your lordships insult me? Or, rather, why insult justice in demanding of me why sentence of death should not be pronounced against me? I know, my lords, that *forum* prescribes that you should ask the question. The form also presents the right of answering. This, no doubt, may be dispensed with, and so might the whole ceremony of the trial, since sentence was already pronounced at the Castle before the jury was impanelled. Your lordships are but the priests of the oracle, and I insist on the whole of the forms."

(Here Mr. Emmet paused, and the court desired him to proceed.)

"I am charged with being an emissary of France. 'An emissary of France!' And for what end? It is alleged that I wished to sell the independence of my country, and for what end? Was this the object of my ambition? And is this the mode by which a tribunal of justice reconciles contradiction? No, I am no emissary, and my ambition was to hold a place among the deliverers of my country, not in power, nor in profit, but in the glory of the achievement. Sell my country's independence to France! and for what? Was it a change of masters? No, but for my ambition. Oh, my country, was it personal ambition that could influence me? Had it been the soul of my actions, could I not, by my education and fortune, by the rank and consideration of my family, have placed myself amongst the proudest of your oppressors? My country was my idol. To it I sacrificed every selfish, every endearing sentiment, and for it I now offer myself, O God! No, my lords, I acted as an Irishman, determined on delivering my country from the yoke of a foreign and unrelenting tyranny, and the more galling yoke of a domestic faction, which is its joint partner and perpetrator in the patriicide from the ignominy existing with an exterior of splendor and a consciousness of depravity. It was the wish of my heart to extricate my country from this doubly-riveted despotism—I wished to place her independence beyond the reach of any power on earth. I wished to exalt her to that proud station in the world. Connection with France was indeed intended, but only as far as mutual interest would sanction or require. Were the French to assume any authority inconsistent with the purest independence, it would be the signal for their destruction. We sought their aid—and we sought it as we had assurance we should obtain it—as auxiliaries in war, allies in peace. Were the French to come as invaders or enemies, uninvited by the wishes of

the people, I should oppose them to the utmost of my strength. Yes! my countrymen, I should advise you to meet them upon the beach with a sword in one hand and a torch in the other. I would meet them with all the destructive fury of war. I would animate my countrymen to immolate them in their boats, before they had contaminated the soil of my country. If they succeeded in landing, and if forced to retire before superior discipline, I would dispute every inch of ground, burn every blade of grass, and the last entrenchment of liberty should be my grave. What I could not do myself, if I should fall, I should leave as a last charge to my countrymen to accomplish; because I should feel conscious that life, any more than death, is unprofitable when a foreign nation holds my country in subjection. But it was not as an enemy that the succors of France were to land. I looked, indeed, for the assistance of France, but I wished to prove to France and to the world that Irishmen deserved to be assisted—that they were indignant at slavery, I wished to procure for my country the guarantee which Washington procured for America—to procure an aid which, by its example, would be as important as its valor, disciplined, gallant, pregnant with science and experience, that of a people who would perceive the good and polish the rough points of our character. They would come to us as strangers and leave us as friends, after sharing our perils and elevating our destiny. These were my objects, not to receive new taskmasters, but to expel old tyrants. It was for these ends I sought aid from France, because France, as an enemy, could not be more implacable than the enemy already in the bosom of my country.”

(Here he was interrupted by the court.)

“I have been charged with that importance in the emancipation of my country as to be considered the keystone of the combination of Irishmen, or, as your lordship expressed it, ‘the life and blood of the conspiracy.’ You do me honor over much, you have given to the subaltern all the credit of a superior. There are men engaged in this conspiracy who are not only superior to me, but even to your own conceptions of yourself, my lord—men before the splendor of whose genius and virtues I should bow with respectful deference, and who would think themselves disgraced by shaking your blood-stained hand.”

(Here he was interrupted.)

“What, my lord, shall you tell me, on the passage to the scaffold, which that tyranny (of which you are only the intermediary executioner) has erected for my murder, that I am accountable for all the blood that has and will be shed in this struggle of the oppressed against the oppressor—shall you tell me this, and must I be so very a slave as not to repel it? I do not fear to approach the Omnipotent Judge to answer for the conduct of my whole life, and am I to be appalled and falsified by a mere remnant of mortality here? By you, too, although if it were possible to collect all the innocent blood that you have shed in your unhallowed ministry in one great reservoir your lordship might swim in it.”

(Here the judge interfered.)

“Let no man dare, when I am dead, to charge me with dishonor, let no man affront my memory by believing that I could have engaged in any cause but that of my country’s liberty and independence, or that I could have become the phant minion of power in the oppression and misery of my country. The proclamation of the Provisional



Government speaks for my views; no inference can be tortured from it to countenance barbarity or debasement at home, or subjection, humiliation, or treachery from abroad. I would not have submitted to a foreign oppressor, for the same reason that I would resist the domestic tyrant. In the dignity of freedom I would have fought upon the threshold of my country, and its enemy should enter only by passing over my lifeless corpse. And am I, who lived but for my country, and who have subjected myself to the dangers of the jealous and watchful oppressor, and the bondage of the grave, only to give my countrymen their rights, and my country her independence, am I to be loaded with calumny and not suffered to resent it? No; God forbid!"

(Here Lord Norbury told Mr. Emmet that his sentiments and language disgraced his family and his education, but more particularly his father, Dr. Emmet, who was a man, if alive, that would not countenance such opinions. To which Mr. Emmet replied)

"If the spirits of the illustrious dead participate in the concerns and cares of those who were dear to them in this transitory life, oh, ever dear and venerated shade of my departed father, look down with scrutiny upon the conduct of your suffering son, and see if I have, even for a moment deviated from those principles of morality and patriotism which it was your care to instill into my youthful mind, and for which I am now about to offer my life. My lords, you are impatient for the sacrifice. The blood which you seek is not congealed by the artificial terrors which surround your victim—it circulates warmly and unruined through the channels which God created for noble purposes, but which you are now bent upon destroying for purposes so grievous that they cry to heaven. Be yet patient! I have but a few more words to say—I am going to my cold and silent grave—my lamp of life is nearly extinguished—my race is run—the grave opens to receive me, and I sink in its bosom. I have but one request to ask at my departure from this world, it is—THE CHARITY OF ITS SILENCE. Let no man write my epitaph, for as no man who knows my motives dares now vindicate them, let not prejudice or ignorance asperse them. Let them and me rest in obscurity and peace, and my tomb remain unscribed and my memory in oblivion, until other times and other men can do justice to my character. When my country takes her place among the nations of the earth, *then and not till then*, let my epitaph be written. I have done."

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THE FAMOUS "SWORD SPEECH" OF THOMAS FRANCIS MEAGHER, DELIVERED IN CONCILIATION HALL, DUBLIN, THE LORD MAYOR OF THE CITY IN THE CHAIR.

"My Lord—I am not ungrateful to the man who struck the fetters off my limbs while I was yet a child, and by whose influence my father, the first Catholic that did so for two hundred years, sat for the last two years in the civic chair of my native city. But, my lord, the same God who gave to that great man the power to strike down one odious ascendancy in this country, and who enabled him to institute in this land the laws of religious equality—the same



God gave to me a mind that is my own, a mind that I was to use and not to surrender

"The soldier is proof against an argument—but he is not proof against a bullet. The man that will listen to reason—let him be reasoned with. But it is the weaponed arm of the patriot that can alone prevail against battalioned despotism.

"Then, my lord, I do not condemn the use of arms as immoral, nor do I conceive it profane to say that the King of Heaven—the Lord of Hosts! the God of Battles—bestows His benediction upon those who unsheath the sword in the hour of a nation's peril. From that evening on which in the valley of Bethulia he nerved the arm of the Jewish girl to smite the drunken tyrant in his tent, down to this, our day, in which he has blessed the insurgent chivalry of the Belgian priest, His Almighty hand has ever been stretched forth from his throne of Light to consecrate the flag of freedom—to bless the patriot sword! Be it in the defence, or be it in the assertion of a people's liberty, I hail the sword as a sacred weapon; and if, my lord, it had sometimes taken the shape of the serpent and reddened the shroud of the oppressor with too deep a dye, like the anointed rod of the High Priest, it has at other times, and as often, blossomed into celestial flowers to deck the freeman's brow.

"Abhor the sword—stigmatize the sword? No, my lord, for in the passes of the Tyrol it cut to pieces the banner of the Bavarian, and, through those cragged passes, struck a path to fame for the peasant insurrectionists of Inspruck! Abhor the sword—stigmatize the sword? No, my lord, for at its blow a giant nation started from the waters of the Atlantic, and by its redeeming magic and in the quivering of its crimsoned light the crippled colony sprang into the attitude of a proud Republic—prosperous, limitless, and invincible! Abhor the sword—stigmatize the sword? No, my lord, for it swept the Dutch marauders out of the fine old towns of Belgium—scourged them back to their own phlegmatic swamps—and knocked their flag and sceptre, their laws and bayonets, into the sluggish waters of the Scheldt.

"My lord, I learned that it was the right of a nation to govern itself, not in this hall, but on the ramparts of Antwerp, I learned the first article of a nation's creed upon those ramparts, where freedom was justly estimated, and where the possession of the precious gift was purchased by the effusion of generous blood. My lord, I honor the Belgians for their courage and their daring, and I will not stigmatize the means by which they obtained a citizen-king, a chamber of deputies."

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#### A. M. SULLIVAN ON THE MANCHESTER MARTYRS

Arraigned in the Dock in Green Street Court House, Dublin, February, 1868, for defending the motives of the "Martyred Three" in his newspaper, the late A. M. Sullivan spoke as follows:

"Gentlemen—The present prosecution arises directly out of what is known as the Manchester tragedy. The Solicitor-General gave you his version, his fanciful sketch of that sad affair, but it will be my duty to give you the true facts, which differ considerably from the Crown story. The Solicitor-General began with telling us about 'the broad summer's sun of the 18th of September.' (Laughter)

Gentlemen, it seems very clear that the summer goes far into the year for those who enjoy the sweets of office, nay, I am sure it is summer 'all the year round' with the Solicitor-General, while the present ministry remain in. A goodly golden harvest he and his colleagues are making in this summer of prosecutions, and they seem very well inclined to get up enough of them. (Laughter) Well, gentlemen, I am not complaining of that, but I will tell you who complain loudly—the outs, with whom it is midwinter, while the Solicitor-General and his friends are enjoying this summer. (Renewed laughter) Well, gentlemen, some time last September two prominent leaders of the Fenian movement—alleged to be so, at least—named Kelly and Deasey, were arrested in Manchester. In Manchester there is a considerable Irish population, and amongst them it was known those men had sympathizers. They were brought up at the police court—and now, gentlemen, pray, attentively mark this. The Irish executive that morning telegraphed to the Manchester authorities a strong warning of an attempted rescue. The Manchester police had full notice—how did they treat the timely warning sent from Dublin, a warning which, if heeded, would have averted all this sad and terrible business which followed upon that day? Gentlemen, the Manchester police authorities scoffed at the warning. They derided it as a 'Hirish' alarm. What! The idea of low 'Hirish' hodmen or laborers rescuing prisoners from them, the valiant and the brave! Why, gentlemen, the Seth Bromleys of the 'force' in Manchester waxed hilarious and derisive over the idea. They would not even ask a truncheon to put to flight even a thousand of those despised 'Hirish', and so, despite specific warning from Dublin, the van containing the two Fenian leaders, guarded by eleven police officers, set out from the police office to the gaol. Now, gentlemen, I charge on the stolid vain-gloriousness in the first instance, and the contemptible pusillanimity in the second instance, of the Manchester police—the valiant Seth Bromleys—all that followed. On the skirts of the city the van was attacked by some eighteen Irish youths having three revolvers—three revolvers, gentlemen, and no more—amongst them. The valor of the Manchester eleven vanished at the sight of those three revolvers—some of them, it seems, loaded with blank cartridges. The Seth Bromleys took to their heels. They abandoned the van. Now, gentlemen, do not understand me to call those policemen cowards. It is hard to blame an unarmed man who runs away from a pointed revolver, which, whether loaded or unloaded, is a powerful persuasion to—depart. But I do say that I believe in my soul that if that had occurred here in Dublin, eleven men of our metropolitan police would have taken those three revolvers or perished in the attempt. (Applause) Oh, if eleven Irish policemen had run away like that from a few poor English lads with barely three revolvers, how the press of England would yell in fierce denunciation! Why, they would trample to scorn the name of Irishmen—" (Applause in the court, which the officials vainly tried to silence.)

Mr. Justice Fitzgerald—"If these interruptions continue the parties so offending must be removed."

Mr. Sullivan—"I am sorry, my lord, for the interruption; though not sorry the people should indorse my estimate of the police. Well, gentlemen, the van was abandoned by its valiant guard, but there remained inside one brave and faithful fellow, Brett, by name. I am

now giving you the facts as I in my conscience and soul believe they occurred—and as millions of my countrymen—aye, and thousands of Englishmen, too—solemnly believe them to have occurred, though they differ in one item widely from the Crown version. Brett refused to give up the key of the van, which he held, and the attacking party commenced various endeavors to break it open. At length one of them called out to fire a pistol into the lock, and thus burst it open. The unfortunate Brett at that moment was looking through the keyhole, endeavoring to get a view of the inexplicable scene outside, when he received the bullet and fell dead. Gentlemen, that may be true, or it may be the mistaken version. But even suppose your view differs sincerely from mine, will you, can you, hold that I, thus conscientiously persuaded, sympathize with murder, because I sympathize with men hanged for that which I contend was accident, and not murder? That is exactly the issue in this case. Well, the rescued Fenian leaders got away, and then, when all was over—when the danger was passed—valor tremendous returned to the fleet-of-foot Manchester police. Oh, but they wreaked their vengeance that night on the houses of the poor Irish in Manchester! By razzia they soon filled the jails with our poor countrymen, seized on suspicion. And then broke forth all over England that shout of anger and passion which none of us will ever forget. The national pride had been sorely wounded, the national power had been openly defied, the national fury was aroused. On all sides resounded the hoarse shout for vengeance, swift and strong. Then was seen a sight, the most shameful of its kind that this century has exhibited—a sight at thought of which Englishmen will yet hang their heads for shame, and which the English historian will chronicle with reddened cheek—those poor and humble Irish youths led into the Manchester dock in chains! In chains! For what were those chains put on untried prisoners? Gentlemen, it was at this point exactly that Irish sympathy came to the side of those prisoners. It was when we saw them thus used and saw that, innocent or guilty, they would be immolated—sacrificed to glut the passion of the hour—that our feelings rose high and strong in their behalf. Even in England there were men—noble-hearted Englishmen, for England is never without such men—who saw that if tried in the midst of this national frenzy those victims would be sacrificed, and accordingly efforts were made for a postponement of the trial. But the roar of passion carried its way. Not even till the ordinary assizes would the trial be postponed. A special commission was sped to do the work while Manchester jurors were in a white heat of panic, indignation, and fury. Then came the trial, which was just what might be expected. Witnesses swore ahead without compunction, and jurors believed them without hesitation. Five men arraigned together as principals—Allen, Larkin, O'Brien, Shore, and Maguire—were found guilty, and, the judge concurring in the verdict, were sentenced to death. Five men—not three men, gentlemen—five men in one verdict, not five separate verdicts. Five men by the same evidence and the same jury in the same verdict. Was that a just verdict? The case of the crown here to-day is that it was—that it is 'sedition' to impeach that verdict. . . . The very evening those men were sentenced thirty newspaper reporters sent the Home Secretary a petition protesting that—the evidence of the witnesses and the verdict of the jury notwithstanding—there was at least one in-

nocent man thus marked for execution. The government felt that the reporters were right, and the jurors wrong. They pardoned Maguire as an innocent man—that same Maguire whose legal conviction is here put in as evidence that he and four others were truly murderers, to sympathize with whom is to commit sedition—nay, to glorify the cause of murder.

But now arose in redoubled fury the savage cry for blood. In vain good men, noble and humane men, in England tried to save the national honor by breasting this horrible outburst of passion. They were overborne. Petitioners for mercy were mobbed and hooted in the streets. We saw all this—we saw all this, and think you it did not sink into our hearts? Fancy if you can our feelings when we heard that yet another man out of five was respited—ah, he was an American, gentlemen—an American, not an Irishman—but that the three Irishmen, Allen, Larkin and O'Brien, were to die—were to be put to death on a verdict and on evidence that would not hang a dog in England! We refused to the last to credit it, and thus incredulous, deemed it idle to make any effort to save their lives. But it was true, it was deadly true. And then, gentlemen, the doomed three appeared in a new character. Then they rose into the dignity and heroism of martyrs. The manner in which they bore themselves through the dreadful ordeal ennobled them forever. It was then we all learned to love and revere them as patriots and Christians. Yes, in that hour they told us they were innocent, but were ready to die, and we believed them. We believe them still. Aye, do we! They did not go to meet their God with falsehood on their lips. On that night before their execution, oh, what a scene! What a picture did England present at the foot of the Manchester scaffold! The brutal populace thronged thither in tens of thousands. They danced, they sang, they blasphemed, they chorused 'Rule Britannia' and 'God Save the Queen' by way of taunt and defiance of the men whose death agonies they had come to see! Their shouts and brutal cries disturbed the doomed victims inside the prison, as in their cells they prepared in prayer and meditation to meet their creator and their God. Twice the police had to remove the crowd from around that wing of the prison, so that our poor brothers might in peace go through their preparations for eternity undisturbed by the yells of the multitude outside. Oh, gentlemen, gentlemen—that scene! that scene in the grey, cold morning, when those innocent men were led out to die—to die an ignominious death before that wolfish mob, with blood on fire—with bursting hearts—we read the dreadful story here in Ireland. We knew that these men would never have been thus sacrificed had not their offence been political and had it not been that in their own way they represented the old struggle of the Irish race. All this we felt, yet we were silent till we heard the press that had hounded those men to death falsely declaring that our silence was acquiescence in the deed that consigned them to murderers' graves. Of this I have personal knowledge, that, here in Dublin at least, nothing was done or intended until the Evening Mail declared that popular feeling, which had ample time to declare itself, if it felt otherwise, quite recognized the justice of the execution. Then we resolved to make answer. Then Ireland made answer. For what monarch, the loftiest in the world, would such demonstrations be made, the voluntary offerings of a people's grief? Think you it was 'sympathy for murder' called us forth or caused



the priests of the Catholic Church to drape their churches? It is a libel to utter the base charge. No, no. With the acts of those men at that rescue we had naught to say. Of their innocence of murder we were convinced. Their patriotic feelings, their religious devotion, we saw proved in the noble, edifying manner of their death. We believed them to have been unjustly sacrificed in a moment of national passion, and we resolved to rescue their memory from the foul stains of their maligners, and make it a proud one forever with Irishmen. Sympathy with murder indeed! What I am about to say will be believed, for I think I have shown no fear of consequences in standing by my acts and principles. I say for myself, and for the priests and people of Ireland who are affected by this case, that sooner would we burn our right hands to cinders than to express, directly or indirectly, sympathy with murder, and that our sympathy for Allen, Larkin and O'Brien is based upon the conviction that they were innocent of any such crime.

"Now, gentlemen, judge ye me on this whole case, for I have done. I have spoken at great length, but I plead not merely for my own cause, but the cause of my country. For myself I care little. I stand before you here with the manacles, I might say, on my hands. Already a prison cell awaits me in Kilmainham. My doom, in any event, is sealed. Already a conviction has been obtained against me for my opinions. Sedition, in a rightly ordered community, is indeed a crime. But who is it that challenges me? Who is it that demands my loyalty? Who is it that calls out to me, 'Oh, ingrate son, where is the filial affection, the respect, the obedience, the support, that is my due?' Unnatural, seditious and rebellious child, a dungeon shall punish your crime!" I look in the face of my accuser, who thus holds me to the duty of a son. I turn to see if there I can recognize the features of that mother whom indeed I love my own dear Ireland. I look into that accusing face, and there I see a scowl, and not a smile. I miss the soft, fond voice, the tender clasp, the loving word. I look upon the hands reached out to grasp me—to punish me, and lo, great stains, blood-red, upon those hands, and my sad heart tells me it is the blood of my widowed mother, Ireland. Then I answer to my accusers, 'You have no claim on me—on my love, my duty, my allegiance. You are not my mother. You sit indeed in the place where she should reign. You wear the regal garments torn from her limbs, while she now sits in the dust, uncrowned and overthrown, and bleeding from many a wound. But my heart is with her still. Her claim alone is recognized by me. She still commands my love, my duty, my allegiance, and whatever the penalty may be, be it prison chains, be it exile or death, to her I will be true.' But gentlemen of the jury, what is that Irish nation to which my allegiance turns? Do I thereby mean a party, or a class, or a creed? Do I mean only those who think and feel as I do on public questions? Oh, no! It is the whole people of this land—the nobles, the peasants, the clergy, the merchants, the gentry, the traders, the professions—the Catholic, the Protestant, the dissenter. Yes, I am loyal to all that a good and patriotic citizen should be loyal to, I am ready, not merely to obey, but to support with heartfelt allegiance, the constitution of my own country—the Queen as Queen of Ireland, and the free Parliament of Ireland once more constituted in our national senate-house in College Green. And re-constituted once more it will be. In that hour the laws will again



be reconciled with national feeling and popular reverence. In that hour there will be no more disesteem, or hatred, or contempt for the laws, for, howsoever a people may dislike and resent laws imposed upon them against their will by a subjugating power, no nation disesteems the laws of its own making. That day, that blessed day, of peace and reconciliation, and joy, and liberty, I hope to see. And when it comes, as come it will, in that hour it will be remembered for me, that I stood here to face the trying ordeal, ready to suffer for my country—walking with bared feet over red-hot plowshares, like the victims of old. Yes, in that day it will be remembered for me, though a prison awaits me now, that I was one of those journalists of the people who, through constant sacrifice and self-immolation, fought the battle of the people, and won every vestige of liberty remaining in the land."

### DEFIANCE TO GLADSTONE

SPEECH DELIVERED BY CHARLES STEWART PARNELL AT WEXFORD, OCTOBER 9TH, 1881.

Fellow Countrymen —

You have gained something by your exertions during the last twelve months, but I am here to-day to tell you that you have gained but a fraction of that to which you are entitled. And the Irishman who thinks that he can throw away his arms, just as Grattan disbanded the volunteers in 1783, will find to his sorrow and destruction, when too late, that he has placed himself in the power of the perfidious and cruel and relentless English enemy. (Then, turning to Mr Gladstone's speech, he continued)

It is a good sign that the masquerading knight-errant, this pretending champion of the rights of every other nation except those of the Irish nation, should be obliged to throw off the mask to-day and stand revealed as the man who, by his own utterances, is prepared to carry fire and sword into your homesteads, unless you humbly abase yourselves before him and before the landlords of the country. But I have forgotten. I said that he maligned everybody Oh, no. He has a good word for one or two people. He says the late Isaac Butt was a most estimable man and a true patriot. When we in Ireland were following Isaac Butt into the lobbies, endeavoring to obtain the very Act which William Ewart Gladstone, having stolen the idea from Isaac Butt, passed last session, William Ewart Gladstone and his ex-Government officials were following Sir Stafford Northcote and Benjamin Disraeli into the other lobby. No man in Ireland is great until he is dead and unable to do anything more for his country.

In the opinion of an English statesman, no man is good in Ireland until he is dead and buried and unable to strike a blow for Ireland. Perhaps the day may come when I may get a good word from English statesmen as being a moderate man, after I am dead and buried. When people talk of "public plunder" they should ask themselves who were the first plunderers in Ireland. The land of Ireland has been confiscated three times over by the men whose descendants Mr. Gladstone is supporting in the enjoyment of the fruits of their plunder by his bayonets and his buckshot. And when we are spoken to

about plunder we are entitled to ask who were the first and biggest plunderers. This doctrine of public plunder is only a question of degree.

In one last despairing wail Mr Gladstone says, "And the Government is expected to preserve peace with no moral force behind it." The Government has no moral force behind them in Ireland; the whole Irish people are against them. They have to depend for their support upon a self-interested and a very small minority of the people of this country, and therefore they have no moral force behind them, and Mr Gladstone in those few short words admits that English government has failed in Ireland.

He admits the contention that Grattan and the volunteers of 1782 fought for, he admits the contention that the men of '98 died for, he admits the contention that O'Connell argued for, he admits the contention that the men of '48 staked their all for; he admits that the men of '67, after a long period of depression and apparent death of national life in Ireland, cheerfully faced the dungeons and horrors of penal servitude for, and he admits the contention that to-day you, in your overpowering multitudes, have established, and, please God, will bring to a successful issue—namely, that England's mission in Ireland has been a failure, and that Irishmen have established their right to govern Ireland by laws made for themselves on Irish soil. I say it is not in Mr Gladstone's power to trample on the aspirations and rights of the Irish nation with no moral force behind him.

These are brave words that he uses, but it strikes me that they have a ring about them like the whistle of a schoolboy on his way home through a churchyard at night to keep up his courage. He would have you believe that he is not afraid of you because he has disarmed you, because he has attempted to disorganize you, because he knows that the Irish nation is to-day disarmed as far as physical weapons go. But he does not hold this kind of language with the Boers. At the beginning of this session he said something of this kind with regard to the Boers. He said that he was going to put them down, and as soon as he had discovered that they were able to shoot straighter than his own soldiers he allowed these few men to put him and his Government down.

I trust as the result of this great movement we shall see that, just as Gladstone by the Act of 1831 has eaten all his own words, has departed from all his formerly declared principles, now we shall see that these brave words of the English Prime Minister will be scattered like chaff before the united and advancing determination of the Irish people to regain for themselves their lost land and their legislative independence.

STATE OF IRELAND IN 1882—LAND LEAGUE DAYS—SPEECH DELIVERED IN  
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, ENGLAND, FEBRUARY 14TH, 1882,  
BY HONORABLE THOMAS SEXTON, M. P.

Mr Sexton, resuming the adjourned debate on the Queen's speech, said he arose to support the amendment which his honorable friend, the member for the County of Longford, brought before the house. That amendment had been described as a long indictment of the

Government. It was a long indictment, but it did not contain a single superfluous word. Every clause in it expressed a crime against public right, and every crime stood verified, not by reasonable suspicion, but by absolute and widespread public knowledge. This debate, while it was ostensibly occupied with large questions of public policy, had resolved itself into a deliberate, sustained and venomous attack upon his honorable friend, the member for the City of Cork (Mr Parnell). He was an absent man. They had heard the pathetic account of the struggle between the infant Hercules and the serpent, but so far as the conflict in this debate had lain between the Treasury Bench and the honorable member for the City of Cork, it had lain between a dozen freemen and one man, whom before the conflict began they had carefully manacled and gagged (Cheers). There were two classes of speech in this debate which invited brief attention. In one class they who were concerned with the Land League had cause of complaint for being sought to be made morally responsible for the most serious and the most atrocious of crimes, and he experienced anew upon this occasion what he had noted more than once before, that the most solemn and the most exalted reference to public morality came from the gentlemen who were talking out of their briefs (Cheers). The Solicitor-General for Ireland, fresh from the breezy and moral atmosphere of the four courts (laughter), fresh from the elevating experience of the Derry election, had taken it upon himself to lecture honorable members of the house on the subject of public morality (laughter and cheers). He spoke of the height of soul and the elevation of idea, but he (Mr Sexton) would not delay the house to inquire how far height of soul and elevation of idea were evidenced at the Derry election, nor would he delay to inquire how far they ought to be lectured upon the ethics of rent by a gentleman who, if he might borrow a metaphor from an humble but a useful class of trade, appeared before the public at the Derry election as the "cheap jack" of the Liberal Party.

To another class of speeches he had also briefly to allude. They were those of the advocate and spokesmen of the landlord party in the house. The position of the landlord party upon this discussion was one extremely simple. They resented any attempts, the slightest, the most partial interference, with their historic right and privilege of arbitrarily plundering their tenants (Cheers).

That was precisely the state of the case. Their class found an adequate spokesman in the person of the honorable member for Leitrim County. That honorable and gallant member proceeded to interest the house in the beautiful spectacle afforded by 3,000 landlords in Dublin, who were quite unanimous in the question to dip their hands into somebody else's pockets (Cries of "No.") Well, yes, either the pockets of the tenants or of the State. It matters nothing to the landlords, so long as it was a pocket and so long as it had something in it (Cheers).

The Honorable Gentleman was horrified by the theory that a live and thrive policy was to prevail in reference to the Irish tenants. They could well understand the opposition of the honorable and gallant member to such a motion, because they had good reason to believe that upon his property in the County Leitrim every form of ingenuous despotism and every kind of mean exaction prevailed. He (Mr. Sexton) happened to know that the charitably disposed in

other parts of Ireland were sending clothes to cover the naked bodies of his evicted tenantry.

That debate had resolved itself in a great measure, as he had said, into an attack upon the honorable member for Cork (Mr. Parnell)—and he might say that attacks upon Mr. Parnell were synonymous with attacks upon the Land League. They had been told that the Land League was an organization, the object of which was plunder, and that the means by which it proposed to attain its object was by outrage and intimidation, and he held that some right honorable and honorable gentlemen had even said by murder. It was difficult for a man of any sensibility or of any moral sense to rise in that house and undertake the task of defending an organization on behalf of which the fiercest prejudices of a people ignorant of Ireland had been excited by the most ingenuous statesman and the greatest master of oratorical art (Cheers). He undertook to say that he could speedily prove to the house that their description of the Land League had been violently and wantonly removed from truth. What, as a general rule, was the description of the class of Irish landlords? It was a familiar fact that they were planted upon the soil of Ireland by confiscation, and it was a fact equally familiar that in the centuries which had since elapsed they had never in any sense allied themselves to the people, that they had never ceased to be an alien class, never interested themselves in the welfare of their tenants, and had merely performed the functions of rent-wainers, and stood to-day as a class as alien to the interests of Ireland as they were the first day that confiscation planted them there (Cheers). They were as a body an embarrassed, a deeply involved body of men, and even in the case of some of them who may have been unwilling to act harshly, they had been by a compulsion derived from the evil days of their forefathers forced to be so. He had recently become acquainted with some facts that would explain his meaning to the house. For the eight years succeeding the passing of the Encumbered Estates Court Act the area of Irish land sold in the courts was three million five hundred thousand acres, the rental of which was one million and a quarter pounds sterling, whilst the scheduled incumbrances upon them amounted to thirty-six million pounds sterling. Thus it would be seen that the landlords of these estates, with a rental of one million and a quarter, were liable for the interest on incumbrances which amounted to two millions per annum. Any thoughtful man would see that the existence of the tenants of these men must have been a lifelong agony.

One of the advantages which was expected from the Landed Estates Court was that it would do away with the rollicking, spend-thrift landlord and replace him by a man of more commercial principles, but instead of that it had added a new curse, for he was succeeded by the "Ebenezer Scrooge," who had made his money over the counter, and who went into the business of landlord with a gaming spirit, as a commercial speculation, and determined to extort the last penny the soil could afford. To what did the Land League owe its origin? The House was aware that for three years before 1879 the harvests of Ireland had been bad beyond the memory of man. The bulk of the tenants were driven, in an effort to pay their back rents, to borrow large sums of money. In this extreme crisis the landlords showed no disposition to give help to the people. Evictions were carried out and notices to quit—they were familiar



with the phrase—fell like snowflakes on the land. The landlord class, and they alone, abstained from any works of mercy, and seemed to avail themselves of the loans offered by the State, and those who did get any money had the cynicism and shamelessness not to spend it for the purposes for which it was obtained. What were the objects and what are the objects of the Land League? He said, what are they? because the Land League, although proclaimed as an illegal assembly, had not morally ceased to exist (Irish cheers), and would one day resume its active existence. Its objects were two-fold and were plainly stated upon its card of membership. The first was to put down rackrenting, eviction and landlord oppression. The Prime Minister (Mr. Gladstone) professed to have attained that object by the Land Act. He (Mr. Sexton) was one of those who believed that the Land Act would not carry out the profession.

The second object of the Land League was to enable the tiller of the soil to become, on fair terms, the owner of his holding. They had *that* styled plunder, rapine, revolution; and he should confess that he was not only amused, but bewildered, when he heard statesmen of experience, who must be aware of the exact cause and progress of agrarian reform in every country, express themselves in these terms concerning propositions which were not only feasible, but had recently actually been carried out in practice in that country, in Europe, even in Prussia, which was the most peaceful, the most successful and the most powerful on the continent. The time would come, and it was not far distant, when the Government would recognize the necessity of carrying out the Land League's object, and if a statesman was not found on the other side of the house to do it, he certainly would be found on that, for landlords, who were not so dull as they were obstinate, have discovered that the no-rent manifesto means a great deal and that the only hopeful prospect for them is not to be found in propositions for fixing fair rents, but in fulfillment of the objects of the Land League, which proposed to sever the landlord from the soil by the adoption of equitable terms of purchase. The objects of the Land League remained absolutely the same in every title as they were at first. An effort had been made to identify the Land League with outrage. It did not require much knowledge of history to know that when any men became troublesome to a strong Government, when they had set themselves to the remedying of abuses involving strongly established vested interests, they must expect to be maligned and to be traduced, to have their every action misconstrued, and to have their every word coupled with accusations of crime. It included the principal agriculturists in the home counties, and the principal professional men in the various towns in Ireland. Anybody looking over the roll of members of the Land League must recognize at once that the accusation which coupled these names with outrage and crime was farcical and wanton in the extreme. How were the local branches constituted? The parish priest was generally the president and his assistant clergy were associated with him in the work of the branch. The managing committees were composed, in the towns, of substantial merchants, and in the rural parishes of the most substantial and respectable farmers. He had personal knowledge of the members of the Land League in nearly every town in Ireland; and he assured the House, upon his honor, that what he stated was the exact truth. How could he think that men like these would identify themselves with



acts of outrage? And yet these were the very men (whom the right honorable gentlemen under an act which was intended for the midnight prowlers and dissolute ruffians) arrested and cast into the prisons of the country. They heard about boycotting. Boycotting was not an article of the Land League. It had existed in Ireland before now, and it existed in other countries also. It was not confined to any social grade. They understood it in Pall-Mall quite as well as in Mayo. There was an irresistible instinct in the human mind which drove men suffering under a sense of wrong to resort to that method of expressing their feelings. And among the rules of the Land League there were two on which it mainly depended for succor. One was that no tenant should act singly on the question of rent, but that as the despotic power of the landlord had always sprung out of the fact that he took the tenants one by one and isolated them, the tenants, to paralyze this power, should band themselves together and offer him what the needy times in which they lived enabled them to afford, and the other rule was that no tenant should take a farm from which another had been evicted. The pivot upon which the old system of tyranny turned, and on which the landlord power in Ireland rested, arose from the fierce and hungry competition for land which existed in the country. Whenever a farm fell vacant, no matter through what injustice, no matter what was the rent asked for it, some miserable tenant, driven to his wits' ends for the means of living, was willing to come forward and in competition with others of his class to offer, or at least to promise, whatever rent the landlord asked. So long as that system was allowed to continue the landlords had the matter entirely in their own hands, while on the other side of the question there was a body of tenants, hard worked, without requital for their labor, miserable, oppressed, anxious, and discontented. The Land League established a rule based upon voluntary action. The tenants should not isolate themselves on the question of rent, but should act together, and that no tenant should take a farm from which another had been unjustly evicted. It was in reference to the last rule that the device of boycotting came into force, because there were still men who would persist in acting against the interests of the tenants, and the tenants concurred, and he conceived and should always assert it that the tenants were perfectly justified. When any man acted against their interest and preferred his own selfish ends to the public good they were, he repeated, justified in socially discountenancing such a man; they were justified in refusing to hold intercourse with him, and, he would add, they were justified in refusing to work for him, because, owing to his own selfish interest, he had proclaimed himself a public enemy. (Cheers.)

If the people of Ireland had any rational method of expressing their wishes and preserving and guarding their interests by laws made by themselves, he should be very slow to say that any individual man in such a community should be subjected to anything which might be called persecution, but when the Irish people had no such right, when they were represented simply by a few men in that House who could be voted down at any moment, that when they had practically no effective existence within the bounds of the constitution, what were they to do? Were they to suffer sneaks and traitors of that kind to do what they pleased and to perpetuate a bad and tyrannical system which made every tenant the slave and

serf of the landlord. No, the boycotting system, so long as it was confined to social discountenancing and to negative action, was a rule not only necessary for success of the movement, but thoroughly justified on grounds of expediency and even morals. He claimed that on the authority of the Land League and by the sanction of its prominent members boycotting could never be advanced an inch beyond the sphere of negative action, and the Land League had as little to do with boycotting, which included outrage and crime, as it had to do with the transit of Venus. The Land League never required for the success of its movement the universal obedience of Ireland. There was plenty of room for dissensions. They should desire that there should be complete liberty of action, and if the honorable member for Galway looked through his speeches he would find strewn through them broadcast adjurations to the people to confine themselves to the wise and sufficient rules of the Land League. He did that because he desired to keep the movement within the recognized bounds of morals, and also because he felt the people would be injuring their own movement if they concerned themselves with any acts of outrage. It was essential for the success and progress of the movement that it should not be embarrassed by coercion, and every man in Ireland knew that a long succession of outrage would inevitably produce coercion, which would embarrass and hamper the movement. What would have happened in Ireland had there been no Land League? In the first place, if there had been no Land League there would have been no Land Act. (Irish cheers.) Did anybody doubt it? The honorable member for Galway seemed to be alone in his belief that there would. But why if there had been no Land League would there have been no Land Act? Firstly, because the Prime Minister in his address to the electors of the country two years ago outlined a great many subjects of legislation, and certainly the Irish land question was not one of these. In the first session of the present Parliament they introduced a small bill of respite, which might save a certain class of miserable Irish tenants for a time from the ruin and the doom of eviction. The right honorable gentleman passed it through that House after much ado and much compulsion, and, he might say, at the point of the bayonet presented at him by the Irish landlords. But when the bill was thrown out in another place the right honorable gentleman meekly assented to that mode of dealing with it and neither he nor his government showed any intention of dealing with the Irish Land Question. They would not have dealt with it but for the existence of the Land League, and their position now, therefore, was that, whereas up to the month of October last they looked on with complacency, if not with pleasure, at the agitation sustained by the Land League, an agitation necessary for the furtherance and completion of their legislative design.

The moment their infant Hercules found his way into the world and that it became necessary to advance him in life, that moment their parental fondness asserted itself, and the Land League, which up to that was useful, was declared an enemy. Why? They had been told that it sometimes happened that the leading advocates of reform became the enemies of reform when it was granted. They were not the enemies of reform. They were willing and anxious to take out of the Land Act whatever benefit it contained, but their crime in the eyes of the Government was that they did not choose

to bend the knee before Cæsar. They did not accept the fruit of the Prime Minister's intellect as a final settlement of the Irish Land Question; they rather strove for that object declared in 1879—the abolition of landlordism in Ireland. It was for that object they had been proclaimed, denounced, imprisoned and maligned in that House and in every part of the country. One entertaining feature in the speech of the right honorable gentleman was his references to America. America was a very favorite topic with the right honorable gentleman on the front of the Treasury benches when speaking about the Land League. They seemed to think it a strange and melancholy dispensation of fate that there should be another Ireland in America. Because the governments which in succession had sat upon the Treasury benches had been participators in the criminal and wicked course by which the Irish landlords denied the Irish people a home in their own land. For many a year and many a generation the Irish people had seen the roof-tree overturned by the crowbar, and had been driven out on the roadside and away on the emigrant ship; had been driven, penniless, wretched and desperate, to find a home and a living at the ends of the earth. They had gone forth with two feelings strong in their hearts: despairing love of their country, that they never again would see, and a fierce, eternal hate of the Government of England (Irish cheers), and the right honorable gentleman wonders that these men should have gone forth cursing the Irish landlords and the English Government, and that they, when a movement is on foot in Ireland to emancipate those whom they left behind to suffer from the system which exiled them should now send their contributions to Ireland. The right honorable gentleman said he must count upon the contributions of those exiles as a factor in the Irish movement. He must digest the venom of this gall though it should split him. The right honorable gentleman held them responsible for the writings of the "Irish World." Well, the "Irish World" had undoubtedly sent some portion of the funds which had maintained the Irish Land League, but the "Irish World" was not the sole contributor to the funds. Contributions had poured in from various parts of America, and through various channels, and if the right honorable gentleman took sufficient interest in the Land League to observe the subscriptions for the past month he might have seen that they amounted to over twenty thousand pounds sterling, the largest amount ever yet subscribed in a single month; and he would have seen that by far the largest portion of that amount came from other sources than the "Irish World." He was not responsible, neither was the honorable member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), nor was even the Land League responsible for anything written by the "Irish World" or by any other American newspaper. They were responsible for the written and avowed principles of the Land League, and for nothing else. (Irish cheers.) The right honorable gentleman said that the Government was driven into the course which they had adopted against the Irish Land League. They believed that otherwise the law would have become powerless, that industry would be impossible in Ireland, and that liberty could not have existed. But in the latter part of his speech the right honorable gentleman answered himself because he said that the state of the relations between landlord and tenant in Ireland and the system of land tenure was such that quiet was impossible, that industry could not thrive, and that reform could



not be attained. It was rather too soon for the right honorable gentleman to presume upon the adequacy of the infant Hercules to cope with the evils of such a system, especially when there was every reason to believe that this infant was in a galloping consumption.

Some honorable members and the House were perhaps aware that on the arrest of his honorable friend, Mr. Dillon, in the month of April, he assumed the direction of the Land League, and as he was one of those who had been charged by the right honorable gentleman with moral responsibility for crimes of various degrees of enormity, up even to the highest crime, he thought it might be well if he asked the House to attend for a few moments while he exhibited a few brief extracts from his published speeches to show the spirit in which the Land League was conducted during the final months of its career. Addressing the meeting of the League on the 17th of May, he said: "Our marvelous success is strong from the fact that our principles have been sound, our statements accurate, our objects laudable and necessary for the public good, and that the means which we have put forward for the attainment of those objects were such as neither in justice nor in morality can be questioned." Again on the 31st of May, addressing the League, he said: "The Government thought this organization sprung into existence because of an imperative necessity. They know it also asks nothing but what public necessity demands, and they know it proposes no means for the furtherance of its objects but the means that religion and conscience and morality approve of." Then referring to the arrest of his friend, John O'Connor, he said: "I will say that there was no man in the community who by nature and by training, by conviction and by the habit of his life, was so truly the friend of public peace or a more sincere champion of public order," and then went on to urge the people to be prudent and to express his confident reliance on the constitutional character of the Land League, which they were determined to maintain to the end.

On the 7th of June the Rev. Mortimer O'Connor, Parish Priest of Ballybunion, in the County of Kerry, occupied the chair at the meeting of the League, and said: "I established a branch of the Land League in my parish and became its president. Every householder in the parish, farmer, laborer, and tradesman, joined it, with the result that the most perfect tranquillity prevails and serious crime is altogether unknown. The restraining influence of the League was clearly visible. The same is the tone of the surrounding parishes. It also applies in a greater or less extent to Munster. Should the Government suppress this organization, which walks openly in the light of day and hides nothing, the populace will be brought face to face with the armed forces of the realm." Perhaps that was what the right honorable gentleman desired. (Irish cheers.) Without restraining or controlling influences in their struggle for existence, our suffering fellow-countrymen will be driven into a course which reason and religion alike condemn. On the same day he (Mr. Sexton) addressed the League and said: "There was a duty now devolving every man who had any influence with the people to advise them to self-control, and that every man should feel it his sacred duty to act as if the safety and welfare of the people depended upon his labor." And yet he was told that the League was an organization which depended upon intimidation and outrage. On

the 14th of June Mr. John Ferguson, of Glasgow, occupied the chair at the meeting of the League, and he said

"They intended to work this movement out on the lines of constitutional agitation, by brain and tongue and what had never been tried in Ireland before, the powers which the trades union organization gave them." It might be interesting to the house to know that at the end of July the League, on his motion, so strongly did it feel an interest in the preservation of social order in Ireland, passed a resolution adjuring the Catholics of Ulster not to interfere with the Orangemen on the occasion of the Orange anniversary. The Catholics of Ulster obeyed that request, and, as a result, for the first time in many years there was no breach of the peace in the Province of Ulster on that Orange anniversary (Irish cheers). He had not heard that the economy of public finance thus procured by the League had been acknowledged by the Government. On the 28th of June he said at a meeting of the League: "We will use every power within the boundary of admitted right, and we will use it firmly, in the assertion of our rights to live in our own native land." On the 5th of July he said "I am proud to be able to claim for the Land League that, for the first time in the history of Ireland it has effectually interfered between these two sections of the people in the North of Ireland who had been kept apart by class prejudice and hate." On the same day he further said, alluding to an arrest that had been made: "He was not only a leader of the people in the South, but applies a thoughtful nature and powerful intellect to the repression of the passions of the people, which might lead to violence and crime." The Government knew this well, and knew also that in his speeches he conveyed that the peaceful objects of the League were sufficient. The Government, feeling it was not within the scope of possibility to arrest my friend on a charge of inciting to outrage, availed themselves of a clause, the cowardly purpose of which was apparent to the Irish members while the bill was passing through the House, and arrested him for treasonable practices. The Government, he would now add, exercised that clause in a far more conspicuous cause. The Right Honorable, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, had immediately before this date made a speech in which he had endeavored, now by hints and shrugs, and anonymous placards, and bits out of newspapers, to associate the Land League with outrage, and this was his (Mr. Sexton's) reply.

Sir William Vernon Harcourt has condemned the League. He has endeavored to give it a character which might prove most suitable for any purpose of expression which might be entertained by the Government. But how had he arrived at this conclusion? Had he judged the Land League by its articles and associations, or by its published rules? Had he judged it by the modes of action it had urged upon the people? Had he judged it by the speeches of its responsible members, or by the course of the movement, carried on as it had been in the face of Heaven and the world? No. But he had gone about like a political scavenger, even to the ends of the earth, sweeping up here a sentence from one speech, and there a sentence from some newspaper. The most inconsiderable trifle was welcome if it could only contribute to increase the heap of rubbish. At the last meeting of the League, which he attended immediately before his illness, he defined in a few words what he conceived to be the foundation of these test cases, which had come into violent denunciations.



ation so much of late. He said: "The object of the League was to select those test cases, which, upon a view of the condition of the country and of the state of the various classes of tenants, will put the question before the Court in the form best calculated to serve the country, and to make known the real point and meaning of the act. At the last meeting of the League ever held, the meeting at which the manifesto was read, that was on the 19th of October, the chair was taken by an ecclesiastic as eminent, as able and as virtuous as any of whom Ireland could boast, the Rev. James Cantwell, the Administrator of the Archdiocese of Cashel (cheers), and here they had the last words ever spoken on the platform of the League. He said. "I appeal and exhort each one of you, in conclusion, that you, yourselves, and so far as your influence goes over others, will abstain from using violence of any kind in the country. Our position is passive resistance. We are an unarmed people, and every man of sense who loves his country, who wishes to do nothing to bring disgrace and injury upon it, will do all he can to prevent violent action." With these words the legal existence of the League terminated, and these words were spoken by an eminent and virtuous clergyman from the chair of the association, who had been denounced as the aider and abettor of outrage and intimidation. (Cheers.) These words he said, the last ever spoken in connection with the League, would remain upon its records to the latest day in defiance of calumny and in repulse of falsehood. The right honorable gentleman (Mr. Forster) told them that he should not have arrested the honorable member for Cork and the other members of Parliament if they had confined themselves to giving advice, but in the face of all that had been said, in the face of the published proceedings of the League, in the face of its known, uncontradicted and uncontradictable, peaceful, passive policy, he had discovered in some mysterious manner that the member for Cork and the other members were responsible not only for advice, but for threats—not merely for threats, but for outrages. (Cheers.) He confessed he was utterly unable to follow the course of reasoning by which the right honorable gentleman arrived at his conclusion. He arrived at it, as he just said, by the method of the political scavenger. (Cheers.) Mr. Parnell said at the Tyrone election and the right honorable gentleman thought he made a great discovery, that the end and object of the Land League was the abolition of all rent and the making of the people the owners of the land. He asked what was there novel in that? He might have found precisely the same thing in any speech of Mr. Parnell's delivered three years ago—and what was the impropriety of such a statement provided it was accompanied, as it was on the Land League platform, with the statement that the landlords should be severed from the soil by purchase on fair and equitable terms. (Cheers.) Mr. Parnell said in order to carry out the policy of the League it would be necessary to keep evicted farms vacant. The right honorable gentleman professed to believe that this involved some violence, some threats, illegal and secret action. Certainly not. The League from the beginning relied and had reason to rely upon the sufficiency of social opinion and the negative system of boycotting to keep these farms vacant. The right honorable gentleman contested indignantly the notion that Mr. Parnell was arrested because of his reply to the Prime Minister. He (Mr. Sexton) could assure him that a widespread suspicion to that effect

existed amongst the Irish people. Mr. Parnell replied to the Prime Minister on the 9th of October, and upon the 13th of October Mr. Parnell was arrested. There was just sufficient time for communication between the two right honorable gentlemen (Messrs. Gladstone and Forster), who sat side by side upon the Treasury Bench, and the prevailing opinion was that, if Mr. Parnell had not denounced the Prime Minister as a coercionist and a slanderer of the Irish people he might have enjoyed a somewhat longer term of liberty. If Mr. Parnell was not arrested upon the ground of his reply to the Prime Minister, why was it that they had no explanation of the arrest of Mr. Dillon? The honorable member pointed out the curious coincidence that only four days elapsed between Mr. Parnell's reply to the Prime Minister's Leeds speech and his arrest, and four days between Mr. Dillon's speech spurning the praises of the Prime Minister and his arrest. He then referred to the extraordinary character of the warrants on which Mr. Parnell and himself had been arrested and showed that the warrant charging them with treasonable practices was an after thought of the Government. There was not a particle of evidence to maintain such a charge, and he had been waiting with curiosity an account of the reasons for such a formidable charge. Of course the right honorable gentleman endeavored to eke out the contention that it was a treasonable practice to make an organized attempt to replace the Queen's courts by the courts of irresponsible leaders. So it was, but who made the attempt? Such an idea never entered into the mind of the Land League or any of its members. They wished to know as soon as possible precisely how much the Land Act meant as a measure of reform for the different classes of tenants in Ireland.

During his stay in Ireland, from May until the 14th of October, until the right honorable gentleman, the Chief Secretary, arrested him he delivered upwards of one hundred speeches, which certainly afforded a considerable area for the selection of treasonable practices if any such existed. But he found he was arrested in consequence of one sentence, in fact one line, in a single speech delivered in the open air at a moment of great excitement to an immense torchlight meeting. He said that "Dublin had broken loose from the Lion and the Unicorn, and had arrayed itself that evening under the banner of the Shamrock and the Harp." Certainly he never suspected that those animals were so sacred to the theory of the British Constitution. He might add with perfect accuracy that he was not thinking at the time of the Parliamentary relations which still existed between Great Britain and Ireland. It was rather a jocular allusion on his part to describe the torchlight procession as a happy departure from the old system. He was thinking of certain social objects of life in the city of Dublin, where the Lion and the Unicorn, being the sign-board of the Castle tradesman, were the types and emblem of a slavish and toadying section of the community. It was, however, a dear joke for him, for the right honorable gentleman pounced upon the phrase, the right honorable and learned gentleman smelt treason in it, and as a consequence he was taken out of bed to Kilmainham, and put into a bed there and kept there for eighteen days, during which time he had an ample opportunity of experiencing the philanthropy which they were told distinguished the character of the right honorable gentleman by the leader of the Government in language likely to earn for him an enduring fame.

He believed that the administration of the Coercion Act will be an enduring monument for the right honorable gentleman, a monument from the top of which long after he had passed away the finger of history would point in contempt and unchanging execration. He should not pass the subject of the philanthropy of the right honorable gentleman without saying that, although his condition of health when thrown into Kilmainham was such as might have well earned the consideration of even a steiner jailer than the right honorable gentleman, he took advantage to deny him the ordinary privileges accorded to prisoners under the Coercion Act, and was not allowed to see the visitors who called at the prison. He went one step further, and his being one of the names, he was proud to say, affixed to the "No Rent" manifesto, he was condemned to solitary confinement. So under the regime of this philanthropist who spent his youth in the hovel and in the cabin, and who was spending his age in reversing the record of his youth, under this regime he suffered seven days' solitary confinement. In addition, he suffered pains and indignities which he would hesitate to describe to the House. He might mention, however, that on one occasion when the honorable member for Cork quitted his cell the honorable member for Rosecommon, who was also there, was removed in consequence of the prison regulation which was for enforcement against the lowest criminals in the land to prevent the committal of an offence which he could scarcely suggest to the House. These were the rules which under the regime of this philanthropist were applied to members of that House who were arrested on false and impudent fraudulent pretences. The right honorable gentleman who had so signalized and so unhappily distinguished himself was looked upon by the Irish people as a clumsy Cromwell (Cheers and laughter). Yes, a commonplace, clumsy Cromwell, a man who has all the spirit and all the will to tyrannize without the capacity or the genius of Cromwell. The main feature of the charge against the honorable member for Cork was his policy with reference to the Land Act, and he proposed to make it clear to the House what his policy really was, and how little it deserved the denunciations which had been levelled against it. He might say to all concerned that Mr. Parnell had ulterior objects. Every Irishman worthy of the name had ulterior objects, and if he had not he was not worthy to be called an Irishman. Mr. Parnell himself and other associates of the Land League regarded the land movement as only a stepping stone to that union of classes which would lead to the restoration of the rights of Ireland, but they denied that these ulterior objects involved any reproach. They consisted in the performance and consummation of a patriotic duty, and within the lines which had been laid down for them by the most eminent authorities they would fight for these ulterior objects to the end. Mr. Parnell expressed his belief that as long as the question of how much rent the tenant should pay remained in dispute it would prove a source of discontent and enmity between the classes of the country. Michael Davitt, he further declared, truly saw that the first step to be taken towards the recovery of their legislative independence was the abolition of landlordism. "It was not," said Mr. Parnell, "a question of novel or condemnable revolution; it was a question of regaining the rights of the Irish people and recovering their legislative independence."

Mr. Parnell had been subjected to some fierce attacks, because it

was said that he proposed to reduce the rental of Ireland from Seventeen Millions to Two or Three Millions

In one of his speeches he declared that in the difference between two or three millions and seventeen millions there was plenty of room for the reformer. The House would at once appreciate the expression, which showed that the honorable member for Cork did not bind himself to one figure, but pointed out that between the two practical legislation might find a fitting medium. On the question of the reduction of the rental of Ireland, Mr. Parnell said they should contend that in the legislative reform on the subject the presumption in respect of the period for which the tenant was allowed for past improvements should be changed to them from time immemorial, as it was he and his, and that the tenant should be deemed to be entitled ancestors who created them, and not the landlord. On this point the Honorable member for Cork read the declaration of Mr. John Bright that nine-tenths of what was to be seen in Ireland in the shape of houses, fences and land cultivation had been put there by the tenants of Ireland, and not by the landlords.

Mr. Parnell then went on to say that the Land Act, which Mr. Bright and his Government had passed, handed over about one-tenth of the improvements to the tenant and left the remaining nine-tenths to the landlord, and it would be their duty, he continued, to struggle until the British Legislature had sanctioned the restoration to the tenants of all the improvements to which, according to Mr. Bright, they were entitled. Two or three millions might be an extravagant estimate to which to reduce the rental of Ireland, but unquestionably, if it were extravagant the responsibility for such extravagance lay more at the door of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster than at the door of the Honorable member for Cork. But it was obvious that if the declaration of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster were carried into legislative effect, the rental of Ireland would be more likely to be reduced to one million than to two or three. To illustrate the manner in which the rents had been raised upon the tenants' improvements, the Honorable member referred to the history of the Farney estate, which was related by Mr. Townsend French, an eminent Irish land agent. In 1789 the rental of the estate was eight million pounds and in 1843, seventy-four years afterwards, the rental of the estate was forty million pounds. What had been the cause of such an enormous difference in seventy-four years? It was evidently the improvements effected by the tenants. Taking the Healy clause in conjunction with the declaration of the Chancellor of the Duchy, he confessed he was amazed and bewildered to account not merely for the imprisonment of the honorable member for Cork, but for the charges of public immorality which had been made against him. The Healy clause, which received the assent of both Houses of Parliament, declared that no rents should be made payable for improvements made or executed by the tenant or his predecessors, in title, unless they had been compensated for them by the landlord. According to the reading of the lawyers, who were guided by the Act of 1870, that should not extend farther back than thirty years. Why should it not? Why should it not apply to improvements made a hundred years ago, as well as improvements made yesterday? But the Honorable member for Cork did not see in the reduction of the rental of Ireland to two or three millions the final solution of the Land Question. The final solution he believed would be the abolition of



landlordism by purchase, and he mentioned two or three millions as the sum to which the rental might be reduced, for the purpose of making clear the untenable position of the landlords of Ireland. If the rights of the landlords of Ireland were represented by such a small figure, it was the interest of every one of them to put an end to the landlord's interest in the soil of Ireland. The Honorable member read the declarations of Mr. Parnell upon the test cases, and said his object and the object of his followers in selecting those cases was a double one. Firstly, by selecting average cases, to ascertain at the earliest possible moment the amount of benefit which the act would confer upon the general body of the tenantry of Ireland. They felt that, if cases of rackrenting were first introduced to the court and first dealt with, large reductions would have been made which would lead to the creation of a false reputation for the Land Act, a reputation which would induce large numbers of tenants to rush into court and doom them to bitter disappointment. But what was it that had since come about? The tenants to the number of 70,000 rushed into court. The Government, instead of allowing the wisely-considered policy of Mr. Parnell to prevail, and to permit the court to deal, first, with the average rental of the country, silenced Mr. Parnell, extinguished the Land League, and left the court to deal with cases of rackrent, and defeated the hopes which had been generated among the tenants of Ireland. The tenants were thus induced to rush in tens of thousands into court, and to involve themselves in legal costs which already had terribly aggravated their position. It had been said that the issue of the manifesto of no rent would become a dead letter. Since the 20th of October last it was within the power of the Government to have trusted to the merits of the act in which they had believed so much, and the "no rent" policy was not intended to last until the last trumpet should sound, would have disappeared. The necessity for the manifesto had been abundantly proved by all that had occurred already in the fourth month of its operation. The Land Act had been proved to be a dismal failure. Even in the North of Ireland, in the province of Ulster, where the farmers had never been tainted with the fever of the Land League, the act was a failure. The Land Act was a failure in regard to its cost on the one hand, and a failure in regard to its effect on the tenants. Up to last Christmas the cost of administering the Land Act was ninety thousand pounds, and up to last Christmas the amount of the rents dealt with amounted to eighteen thousand pounds. What did the house think of the fact that every pound's worth of rent dealt with by the Land Courts involved an expense of fifty pounds to the State? If he were one of the economists on the Ministerialist side of the House, he should shudder to think that there had been a reduction of only four thousand pounds in rents at a cost of ninety thousand pounds to the State. The game was then hardly worth the candle. Already a few hundred cases had been dealt with by the Sub-Commissioners, and nearly one-half of their decisions had been appealed against in superior courts, and the miserable tenants, who were not in a position to pay arrears of rent, how were they to pass from the lower to the higher courts? If the plan of the Honorable member for Cork had been allowed to come into operation all this would have been rendered unnecessary. One case only under the Land Act had reached the final Court of Appeal, and he believed that the landlords had been encouraged, by the Lord



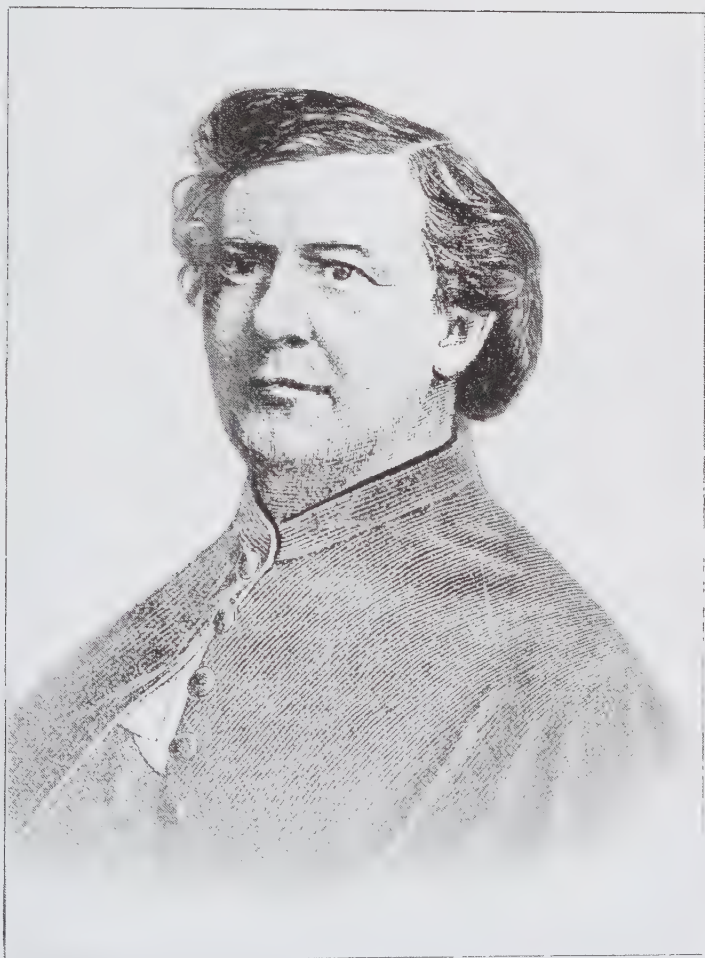
Mayor of London, the Prime Minister, and the First Commissioners of Works to pursue every decision to the final Court of Appeal before the practical effects of the act would be allowed to be felt at all. In the vast majority of cases that would be the result. There is already in the Land Courts a glut of 70,000 or 80,000 cases and there were fully 100,000 tenants who were in arrears of rent, and the First Commissioner of Works on the previous night thought that the landlords had the right to evict those tenants, although the Land Courts of the Government provided no remedy for this state of things. What was now happening? The landlords were at that moment—Sir H. Bruce—"instigated by the Government," Mr. Sexton—Yes; and supported by the First Commissioner of Works, and the infant Hercules, with its bodyguard of 60,000 troops, determined to evict those 100,000 poor tenants now in arrears. A more shameful thing never took place under any Government in Ireland. The landlords told the Government distinctly that they were now evading the Land Act. They threatened the tenants that if they go into the Land Courts they will take them to Superior Courts, and there obtain writs against them for the arrears, and thus the Superior Court would enable the landlords to evict the tenants who happened to be in arrears. This was the fault of the Government, who left it optional with the landlord to say whether he should or not accept the arrears clause of the act, and in consequence of this choice being permitted under the act, 100,000 tenants were left naked and defenceless in the hands of the landlords. The landlords were threatening that those poor tenants would be evicted for the old arrears, and the effect of this was that the tenants were obliged to accept whatever terms were offered to them by the landlords. He assured the head of the Government that the Land Act was being evaded by the landlords all over the country, and because the Government had refused to provide in the act protection for the tenants in arrears, the landlords were placing their arrears as an insurmountable barrier between their tenants and the Land Courts. Supposing that all the cases now before the courts could be dealt with as by a magician's wand, what would be the result? It was a mistake to presume that the Land Act applied to the whole of Ireland. Four million acres being superior land, was let on lease and did not come under the act. Three or four million more acres was land held by the landlords who let it to graziers by agreement for terms of six or twelve months, and then there was between seven and eight million acres of land—inferior land—which was held by the poorer classes of tenants and which would not come under the operation of the act. The value of this land was about seven million pounds sterling and no more, and if the Land Act could be applied to these seven millions of acres, based upon the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners, and their decisions had not been based upon any principle that he could discover, the result would be more satisfactory.

The decisions of the Commissioners, by some strange portentous circumstance, had come to what he called a fluctuating level, like a Will o' the Wisp over a bog, never on the surface exactly, but still visible at a certain line, and they appeared to accept Griffiths' valuation as their basis, that which had been recommended by the Land League. But that was a decision which might have been acceptable some years ago, but which would not be acceptable now. What, for instance, would be the effect of a reduction on that basis

on the seven million acres of land? Why, a gross reduction of about one and a half million sterling on the whole rent of Ireland. Did the Right Honorable Gentleman, the Prime Minister, believe that the great agrarian movement in Ireland could be satisfied with a reduction of one and a half millions sterling in the rents of the country or a reduction of two shillings in the pound in the rental of Ireland? The idea would be absurd. Even if this reduction came into operation to-morrow, it could not satisfy and could not abate the agrarian demands of the people. But, far from this being possible, it was now stated on authority that the reductions to be made in rent would henceforth be at a lower figure than twenty-five per cent. Then, another point to be considered was this, that no matter how closely the Land Commissioners applied themselves to their duties, between twenty and thirty years must elapse before the cases in the Land Court could be dealt with. But the Irish people were not prepared to wait until the Twentieth Century, nor even till next year, to have the agrarian question settled. Seeing that the tenants of Ireland were unprotected, seeing that they had no organization to counsel them, seeing that they were liable to eviction and ruin, their friends recommended the only remedy, that there should be "no rent" paid until their defensive organization was restored to them. Considering how the landlords were evading the Land Act, considering how they were threatening to increase the costs of those who went into those courts to have removed a rent that was unjust and tyrannical, he expressed the sincere and fervent hope that the tenants of Ireland would have the courage as well as the wisdom to stand upon the lines of the "No Rent" manifesto. He should delay the House by proceeding to examine the grounds for considering the Right Honorable Gentleman (the Chief Secretary's) claim to be called a philanthropist. Those claims are written broadly on the history of Ireland for the past few months. He had imprisoned and subjected to indignity and needless pain some of his fellow members of the House. He had arrested hundreds of the most respectable men in Ireland, and while he spoke of the Land League as practising terrorism and intimidation on the people, he could not have failed to observe that any one who was honored by the Right Honorable Gentleman's warrant became immediately the object of veneration and love to the Irish people. A man was arrested and instantly a whole countryside assembled, and reaped his crops or ploughed his land or cut and supplied his family with sufficient turf for the winter. A man is sent to Kilmainham and he becomes a poor-law guardian before his release, or finds himself elected as a chairman of the board. A common burgess is imprisoned, and he is released to find himself a mayor, or, rather, he does not come out because the Right Honorable Gentleman keeps him imprisoned, and only by a stretch of his philanthropy allows the right worshipful suspect to sign the official declaration. All this showed that the Land League means the Irish people, and that it was only nonsense and malignity to speak of it as terrorism. The proceeding of the Right Honorable Gentleman's Irish policy reached its climax of absurdity with regard to "United Ireland," the Ladies' Land League, and the Political Prisoner's Aid Society. The member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) on one occasion amused the House by describing the Right Honorable Gentleman as a "Lady Killer." He thought the description scarcely applied now, for the present situation in Ireland was this: the Right Honorable

Gentleman had not succeeded in beating the men, and the women had beaten the Right Honorable Gentleman. Despite all his endeavors to suppress the "Ladies' Land League" by means of a police circular, and by throwing the responsibility upon the magistrates, he had failed in this purpose, and the ladies of Ireland had proved that they possessed spirit and patriotism, and ingenuity in conducting their organization notwithstanding all the acts of the Right Honorable Gentleman and all the devices of his agents. The meanest act of his policy was this: that not being satisfied with having arrested a number of gentlemen and with having weighed, measured, and searched them, not satisfied with having first licensed vintners, and then broken their licenses on the ground that they were bad characters, not satisfied with having tortured men's minds and deprived them of their means of living, he instructs the police to suppress the organization whose object was the collection of funds to save the suspects from living on prison fare. With regard to "United Ireland" it was no uncommon sight in the streets of Dublin to find a burly detective rushing about in pursuit of a barefooted little boy, with a group of awe-stricken citizens surveying the chase, and the big policeman marching off in triumph with one copy of "United Ireland" which he had discovered beneath the boy's ragged shirt. Such was the liberality and the decency of this Liberal Government that the detective invariably refused to give the little beggar a penny for the paper. There were several other points to which the amendment referred, but the Government and the managers of that paper had for some time past been playing hide and seek through the United Kingdom, eyeing every suspicious parcel and running away with some of them before they could be aware of the nature of the contents. Everybody was at a loss to understand the legal justification of this conduct. A parcel, because labeled "United Ireland," was seized by the police before they could ascertain its contents. They had no legal power to seize unless they were aware the papers contained seditious matter. It had all been so ably dealt with the previous night by his Honorable friend the member for County Carlow, the High Sheriff of Dublin, that he would not further delay the House. He believed the rents in reference to the gale coming in March would be smaller than the rents paid last September. He believed that the rents paid next September would be fewer than those paid in March, and that in March of next year they would be fewer still. He believed that the effect of this policy being continued by the people, in the face of the open incitement by the Government last night to the landlords to become wholesale evictors, would prove that there was no means of settling the Irish land question except by taking up the second article of the policy of the Land League, and extinguishing the interest of the landlord in the soil. The rules of the Land League are firm in the minds of the people and the spirit of the Land League is in their hearts. It was from the moral force resulting from these facts that he looked for the emancipation of the Irish people. In the last generation the English Government imprisoned O'Connell and his movement died soon after. But when they arrested O'Connell the hand of old age was heavy upon him, and he did not long survive. The situation at present was quite different. In the height of his popularity and influence, in the vigor of his life and mental power, had they arrested the Honorable member for Cork City. But he would come forth one day, with his patriotism





REV. DR. CHARLES O'REILLY.



confirmed, and his influence strengthened, having suffered the penalty which every Irishman must suffer who conspicuously and courageously defends the cause of the Irish people. He would come forth the advocate, not only of the Irish tenants, but of the Irish people, and he (Mr Sexton) fondly cherished the hope that the political and mental force which that illustrious prisoner has may be successfully used to lead to victory a people who had been taught by bitter adversity to suffer, without giving way, and to struggle in dark and evil days without ever losing hope. He confessed he could not resume his seat without referring to the eloquent and touching words addressed to the House last night, at the close of his speech, by the senior Honorable and learned member for the University of Dublin. One of the saddest circumstances of an Irishman holding a seat in that House was the necessity he was under of constantly listening to some of the ablest, the most intellectual, and best known of their countrymen leading the cause of the alien, and attacking the people from whom he had sprung. Last night the senior member for the University eloquently declared himself a lover of his country, and avowed himself an Irishman to the backbone. He (Mr. Sexton) felt to this statement an answering thrill, and the thought passed through his mind that it may not surpass the genius of the Honorable Gentleman who was now at the head of affairs (Mr Gladstone), that it may not surpass the possibilities of coming years and politics to devise and execute some method which may save Irishmen from the shame and agony of occupying hostile camps in that House, and which may enable them at last to find a common ground for patriotic effort and honorable emulation on the soil of their native country.

Mr Sexton then resumed his seat, having spoken for two hours and twenty minutes. The House divided on the amendment at five minutes to eight o'clock amidst the cheers of the Irish members, who challenged the Attorney General for Ireland to address the House.

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THOMAS MOORE, "THE POET OF ALL CIRCLES AND THE IDOL OF HIS OWN,"  
BY REV DR CHARLES O'REILLY, DELIVERED IN CENTRAL  
MUSIC HALL, CHICAGO, MAY 28TH, 1894

American independence was three years old. The British, with characteristic ingenuity, were investing Charleston in denial of its birth and existence, and Paul Jones was sweeping the cobwebs from their brains and the commerce from their seas in the capacity of an Ego-contra, when, in a latitude a little farther north than the upper shore of Lake Superior, Tom Moore was born. It is strange that Ireland situated so far north, should have a climate rivaling that of southern latitudes, but that country is a land of marvels, God has clustered more miracles within her border than has favored any other land except Palestine. Her sons have been the wonder of all ages—and one of these was Moore. A circumstance of his birth is worth relating. His parents had rented rooms in their house to a gentleman of convivial habits; a number of select spirits had surrounded him for a festive night, when the servant entered and requested that they suspend revelries, in consideration of the mother and child. The gallant host at once acceded to the request. It was then O'Connell's future

friend, Jerry Keller, approved of the adjournment "pro re nata for the thing born." So it was still listening to the sounds of merriment, to which she had become accustomed, that this noble lady gave birth to the greatest of Irish poets. That he was a poet, I shall agree to consider to-night as accidental; my main contention being that he was a typical Irishman and that the type was *very high*. I say this advisedly, because from the day that an alien ritual was read over his inanimate form and the cold Wiltshire clods were choked in upon his coffin, a cool, ill-defined, alienating atmosphere has brooded over his memory in the minds of many of his fellow countrymen; and this ought not to be. For, if ever Ireland had a son whose life was bound to her's by chains of adamant, whose heart went out to her in swelling tides of devotion, whose soul reveled in ecstasy at contemplation of her glories, or burned with lethal rage at sight of her misfortune and sorrows—I fear not to say it—that man was Moore. He was Irish and nothing else. Irish in his filial affection, Irish in his domestic devotion, Irish in his patriotism and his profound religious conviction. I am far from claiming for him an exclusive proprietorship of these qualifications. No shade of the mighty dead would scowl on such an effort more intensely than his. These qualities conspire to fix the true standard of Irish manhood, and are not necessarily allied with learning or genius like to Moore's. It would be enough for him, it is enough for me, if, to-night, I hold him up to the high standard of his national type. I have seen it presented in the famished features of the peasant, as he came for the first time from Lismore or Connemara, and gazed with open-eyed astonishment at the tawdry splendors of a poverty-stricken inland town. I have followed that fellow to the harvest fields of England, and there have seen him toil and starve beside his Saxon co-laborer—who must have his beef and ale—have seen him do and endure that thus he might save the extra shillings for the wife and children, the father and mother, the younger brothers and sisters at home in Holy Ireland; whilst, all the time, in his inmost soul, he regarded the man beside him, and the master over him, of foreign blood and alien creed, with contempt akin to that entertained by the Israelite of old for the uncircumcised whom God allowed to lord it over him only that the divine wrath might be thus in time awakened, and the impious more utterly be destroyed. Nothing in this world has been more signal than the failure inscribed upon the Englishman's endeavor to make the Irishman the creature of his thought. He has carried his defenses by cannon and the sword, he has laid illegitimate hands on his possessions. He has swathed his form in rags and pinched his flesh with hunger—but he has never been able, no, not in the slightest degree, to approach or touch his soul. No! He may submit to his yoke with evil grace, he may dwell in his country, he may embark in his ships and plant for him the distant colony, but under no circumstances will the Irishman ever accept the Englishman's standard of thought. And in any and every case where we are called to sit in judgment upon the all-important question of the individuality of one of our race, I should submit that it should be the principle of our Celtic ethics to get to a man's thought. Let me hear him, or read him, or study him, and I will determine easily and infallibly, has he an Irish thought? Now, take up Tom Moore and read him line by line, cull every recorded incident from the history of his extraordinary career, and tell me, only after due

reflection, can you catch a glimpse from that rich mental repertoire of a thought that was not eminently Irish? But, if I have established this, I have established much. For I have not to plead the superiority, in energy, in intensity, in spiritual refinement of Irish intellectuality, in quality at least. It has been too forcefully illustrated through the ages to the nations, and by few, if by any more than Moore himself. It accounts for what the *Encyclopedia Britannica* calls "the most extraordinary incident in the history of our literature, the instantaneousness with which the son of an humble Dublin grocer, just out of his teens, on his first visit to London, captivated the fashionable world and established himself in the course of a few months as one of its prime favorites. It was not his personal magnetism, though he was not without it, it was not his engaging manners, though he knew how to be agreeable, it was not his minstrelsy, which was acknowledged faulty, it was the fact that he turned upon ripened intellects the pure tide of lustral Irish thought, and to those intellects it came like the chorus of angels to the wakeful shepherds amid the chill dews of the winter night at Bethlehem—it was not merely *music*, it was not revelation. It enchanted such men as Thierry, the French historian who exclaimed: "Ireland, the elder child of the Celtic race! The island of saints! Land of poets; of bold thinkers, of John Erigna, of Berkley, of Toland, of Moore and O'Connell, land of brilliant speech and of lightening sword, which in the senility of the world still preserves the original power of poetry." It vanquished the haughty Byron, an Irish hater by birth and character into the declaration that "there was something so *warm*, so sublime in the core of an Irishman's heart that I envy the dead." It won such men as Willis and Washington Irving even at sight. It melted Roger, and Sidney Smith, and Christopher North into tears. It delighted Scott, Campbell, Jeffry, McAulry, Sheridan, Shields and O'Connell, with its indigenous strains.

It spoke to the European world with its unhesitating, unobstructed accents of a mother's voice. The Orient opened its dreamy eyes at the approach of the sympathetic sounds, and extracted the Asiatic thought from the barbarous dialect in which it was enveloped, and received it for its own.

"I'm told, dear Moore, your lays are sung,  
Can this be true, you lucky man,  
By moonlight in the Persian tongue  
Along the streets of Ispahan?"

What is it I mean to say? that there is something unique, especial and distinctive in Irish thought? C'est moi. That is just what I mean, and would you know it all, or know it better, familiarize yourself with Moore. It is a rich and varied thought balancing from grave to gay, now as joyous as the note of the nightingale, now plaintive as the plover's song, betimes as gentle as the zephyr's breath and anon as scorching as the fiery touch of the fierce sirocco, e. g., "The Last Rose of Summer," and the "Curse of the Informer."

It has been said that although Moore commenced life as a patriot, he sank in after years into the condition of a mere Whig or Liberal, all sentiment of Irish nationality having died out of him. The imputation is an unjust one. It is utterly impossible to divest such a soul of the love of motherland so long as reason crowned her throne.

on the apex of that lofty mind. No person has done more to make the world understand the real relationship subsisting between the Irish soul and the Irish soil, to teach the alien that the cause of Ireland is not an affair of vulgar material interests, but is woven so inextricably around the Irish heart as the network of arteries through which it draws the blood, and the delicate machinery of nerves by which it receives and communicates its impressions, that it has all the passionate romance and pathetic glows of love, that it is invested with something of the mysterious sanctity of religion. No man with heart or brain can read Moore and not become convinced that patriotism is a passion of the Irish heart, which is blent with whatever is ennobling and divine in Irish nature. It dawns upon us like the memory of the first fond gaze of a loving mother's eyes. It is the whispered poetry of childhood's hours. It is the song that is sung by every gurgling brook in the land, for every brooklet in Ireland has been incriminated with the blood of heroes. It is the weird voice that comes to us from the green hillside where our fathers lie sleeping, for every Irish hillside has been strewn with heroed dead. Moore has crammed his pages with the records of their noble deeds, with the triumphs of their tragic deaths. He could be said to have penned his lines with the blood of the martyred heroes of his nation. He deified their deeds in allegorical epics that are without a parallel for pathos and passion. He entwined their names with imperishable strains of music, which wafted them over the world. What is the burdens of his melodies, the inspiration of his epics, the acidity of his satires, the soul of his lyrics, but Ireland, her scenery, her sons and her sadness? Moore never *could* have so written Ireland if he did not *think* Ireland, as well you might suppose the psalms of David to have emanated from a soul but superficially in love with God. The condition of Ireland has been such that ordinary language is inadequate to express her wrongs. Some unusual agency of speech must be employed, such as poetry, parable or prayer, and these Moore wielded with unexampled vigor and unequalled skill. When estimating his character the condition of Ireland ought never to be lost sight of.

It is almost impossible for any one of the present day to realize the political and social condition of the Catholics in that country a century since. It was but a little before the time of Moore's birth that a gentleman holding the position and title of Lord Chancellor stated from the bench "That the laws did not presume a Papist to exist in the kingdom, nor could they breathe without the connivance of the Government." From 1665 exercise of the office of professor, schoolmaster or tutor, by a Catholic was declared penal, and from 1695 the education of the Catholics abroad was prohibited. Moore was thirteen years old before Catholics were allowed to open schools in Ireland. I need not avert to the repeated confiscations of the estates of Catholics, to the laws which prevented them from holding land on lease, to their exclusion from corporate and municipal bodies as well as from the practice of the liberal profession, and the forfeiture of the horse if he were worth twenty-five dollars. Still the darkest hour of the penal night may be said to have been that which measured the distance between Emmett and O'Connell when it was transportation for three or more Irishmen to be found conversing together, and when Irishmen were run outside the gates of Irish cities like lepers at sundown by the sound of the evening bell. This reference to the condition of the Catholics of Ireland at the period



of Moore's birth and after is absolutely necessary if we would fairly estimate his courage, his patriotism and the political influence he exercised. It has been too much the habit to detach Moore's character from the environment of the time, and judge it by standards that are anachronism, historically and philosophically unsound and unjust. As well might we consider Washington apart from the War of Independence or O'Connell extracted from emancipation. It was a crime to christen Tom Moore, yet he was christened, it was a penal offence to educate him, yet he became a great scholar; the colleges were closed against him, yet he went through with all the honors they could confer and ripened into a lofty-souled, liberal-minded man, it was "treason to love his country and death to defend her," yet he loved her passionately and defended her effectively. He was not the stuff of which military martyrs like Robert Emmett are made. He had not in him the material of an active politician like O'Connell. His genius led him into different directions, but his heart was none the less a good warm heart, full of love and friendship, fidelity and patriotism, which overflowed in songs of sympathy and sorrow—songs that will be remembered till the end of time. Though small of stature, in physical courage we know he was not wanting. If it be objected that he was not implicated in Emmett's insurrection, how much of this may we not attribute to the generous, self-sacrificing friend? These two young men, so attached to each other in youth, are, each in his own way, admirable types of the Irish man. One is a strange mixture of gentleness, tenderness, modesty, terrible determination, obstinacy if you will, utter self-abnegation, all included in the highest nobility of soul. The other was gay, genial, kindly affectionate, feeling the Irish tragedy to the marrow of his bones, but not possessed of the vocation to follow his devoted and doomed brother unto death. For *national* no less than *religious* martyrdom must have its call. Circumstances ordinarily reveal the will of God. And in political revolutions as in religious convulsions *all are not meant to die*. Here, no less than there, the intruder is left unsupported by opportune race in a vain-glorious pretension, and makes, as a rule, poor and profitless work of his undertakings. Never was a vocation to national martyrdom more definitely marked than was that of Robert Emmett. He was called to die for his country, and never did man make death more profitable. The death of Moore would have done no good at all. Nay, what was sublime in Emmett would have hardly failed to be ridiculous in Moore. Emmett died, and Moore wept and sang over his grave! From the grave a ghost is forever rising and going forth upon its walk around the world. It is no longer imprisoned within the limits of the land he died to be saved. It floats over the ocean in Music's misty mantle and stalks through the land of the stranger. It weaves its magic spell around the youth of Irish birth and blood, captivates his senses and enlists his soul in the lost enterprise. Through the darkness of night that music carries those plaintive words to his imagination like voices on the night-winds from his own mother land. It comes to his mind laden with the memory of a wrong unavenged and a strife unfinished, of a hope which only brightened suffering and which no human weapon could subdue. It carries with it the conviction that, so long as the *epitaph* remains unwritten, his mission is unfulfilled. It fires his heart and sends the blood boiling through his veins, till all unconsciously his nerves are strung for heroic deeds and even for



reckless enterprises. This is not the language of fancy. Far less is it exaggeration. I come from a city whose native-born but recently went forth and coolly perished in a desperate attempt to blow up London Bridge, not because he envied any man his wealth or station, not that he entertained any animosity towards civil society, nor had he any quarrel with humanity. No but because Robert Emmett was butchered like a beast and his epitaph remained unwritten. I knew him well, so did many of you. He was sedate and thoughtful, tender, brave and tranquil. I have rarely known a more religious soul. I once found him weeping in a corner while "Breathe Not His Name" was being sung in the parlor adjacent. I have ever since found a fearful significance in the lines.

"And the tear that we shed, though in secret it rolls,  
Shall long keep his memory green in our souls."

The young Protestant aristocrat, Emmett, obeyed the divine "call" and died for his countrymen *all* without distinction of race or creed, and the son of the Catholic peasant exile gave life for life to "keep green the martyr's memory," and by this shall all men know what a spiritual intensity lies deep down in Irish patriotism. Between Robert Emmett and William Mackay Lomasney there would seem to have been an infinite distance, but Moore brought them close together. Wanton vengeance for vengeance's sake is not a passion of the Irish heart. The Celtic race is a race ruled by its spiritual instincts rather than by those more ravenous virtues we share with the hyenas and wolves, and a race clad in the celestial armor of faith and hope is imperishable, no matter how disarmed, bare and degraded it may appear in the eyes of a triumphant soldiery or a more ruthless legislature. Moore thoroughly appreciated this. He knew how, in that dark penal-night I have mentioned, the song of "Drimmin dhu Deilish" or the "Black Bird" sung low around the winter turf fire in the *Sheiling*, had more influence to preserve the spirit of Irish nationality than all the enactments of coercion ministries enforced by all the might of England was able to counteract, and he set himself resolutely to the task of binding up with the national music those memories of an honest, noble past—that spirit of defiance to the misfortune of the present—those hopes in a golden future which will never cease to act upon the Irish organization while a drop of Celtic blood courses in a human vein. It is the claim I make for Moore that he knew as well what he was doing while he lived as Emmett did when he died. "I would hold that life any more than death were unprofitable," cried Emmett, "while a foreign power held my country in subjection." It is to the imperishable glory of these two men that they did their work without malice and forethought, and precisely at a time when action was imperatively demanded. The fires of liberty that lit the hullsides in '98 had been quenched in blood. The leaders of the Irish people had been banished or slain; the iniquitous union had been effected with circumstances of atrocity that have no parallel in history. The necks of the devoted nation had been placed in Chancery under England's iron arm, where she was for all time to be kept quiet—when like a meteor from the sky rendered incandescent by the rapidity of its approach to earth, and bursting from suppressed emotion, young Emmett came with lightning sword and flashing eye—

appeared and *died*, crying like Winkleried, "Make way for liberty." It was Ireland's answer and defiance of English power and perfidy to wrest from her autonomy or shake her trust in freedom's God. That death showed England and showed the world how Ireland was to be kept in subjection. It fixed the seal upon the resolve of Irish manhood never to submit to a colonial existence. But, my friends, I believe that death would have lost its force had Moore not lived to give it meaning, and with this view in head and this purpose kept steadily in hand, I dare to believe that it was as heroic in him to live as in Emmett to die. For think again of the time, think of the conditions. After the terrible disaster of the Williamite war following close upon the footsteps of the confederacy of 1641, of the hangings and the burnings and wholesale confiscation and banishments of 1798, after the brutal and powerful and sanguinary suppression of 1803, he still was found the plucky little fellow, to fearlessly, artlessly take up the part of his country, with the inspiration of a bard of ancient Israel, and fling it proudly, fiercely in the face of a scornful, scoffing world. In the very face of defeat and disaster and wreck and ruin, he dared to assert that he still had a country—a country with a past that could not be taken from her, that her glories were imperishable, her history indestructible, her sorrows pathetic, her heroes sublime. Aye, when Ireland was lying before her conqueror, as dead as a corpse on a dissecting table, he seized her harp and made its every chord vibrate with heroic history from Brian Boru to the martyred Emmett. He dared to remind the exultant foeman that when England had yielded to the Dane and stretched out its neck to the yoke of the feudal Norseman, *he had* a country which had offered to the invader the attitude of uncompromising war. "Remember the Glories of Brian the Brave," that Ireland had a people stamped with the undeniable device of freedom and refinement. "The Harp That Once Through Tara's Hall"—that they had peace, order and civilization. "Rich and Rare were the Gems She Wore," that at a time when the coasts of Italy were darkened by the Saracen invasions, when feudal Germany was laid waste before the arrows of the Hungarians, and the hoofs of the Lombard horse were trampling on the vineyards of the south, Ireland lay far away amidst the billows of the Atlantic, an island devoted to the culture of religion and the peaceful sciences, the home of Christian letters and the nursery of Christian virtues. "Like the bright lamp that shone in Kildare's Holy Fame." He pointed out to his own people that they had a country worth fighting and dying for. "There is not in this Wide World a Valley so sweet," and that Ireland had sons who were proud and felt blest to die for her still, as he puts in the mouth of his murdered friend those *deathless* words addressed to his country

"Oh, blest are the lovers and friends who shall live  
The days of thy glory to see,  
But the next dearest blessing that Heaven can give  
Is the power of thus dying for thee."

And I say that next in order of benediction was the blessing and binding up that sentiment with imperishable strains of music, and sending it forth upon the wild winds to accompany Emmett's ghost and give it voice through time and space, and so make his memory

as effective as it is immortal. Aye, and I repeat, the *best* of all is that he *knew* what he was doing

"The stranger shall hear thy lament on his plains,  
The sigh of thy harp shall be sent o'er the deep,  
Till thy masters themselves, as they rivet thy chains,  
Shall pause at the song of their captive and weep."

Ireland will remember and love both these men, but Moore more for the sake of Emmett than for his own very extraordinary claims upon her gratitude. These claims would be paramount though he had done nothing more than snatch from obscurity so much of the sweet, wild, pathetic music floating over our hills and through our valleys and preserved it to us for all time, by linking it with his own tender and charming verse. The IRISH MELODIES, words and music are unique. If every other production of his genius were destroyed or forgotten, these alone would immortalize his memory and establish a claim to the enduring gratitude of his country. Closely examined, in comparison with the national lyrics of any other people or age—Pagan, Jew or Christian, Oriental, European, Greek or Roman, ancient or modern—we find no such other collection. Ballads, songs, lays, odes and historiettes abound indeed in all lands, in all tongues and at all periods, differing in culture and in form. But, so far as known, no attempt has ever been made to embody so many characteristics of a nation, its social life, scenery, manners and customs, legends, traditions, victories and defeats, its dark history and bright hopes in lyric form welded to music, familiar by its antiquities and its winning pathos to the entire people, and inspiring their dances and athletic games, that proclaimed their triumphs and softened their defeats. Analyze the lyric poetry of any country you choose, ancient or modern, and you will find that it covers a comparatively small portion only of the life and history of the people, whereas the subjects of the IRISH MELODIES range over nearly the entire scope of Irish life, past and present. The appearance of the first number produced a profound political impression. They were the most effective auxiliaries brought up to support the eloquence of O'Connell in the struggle for Catholic Emancipation. They served to immense advantage in the agitations for popular education, Parliamentary reform, the tithe-war and the church establishment. So, this man who has been accused of a want of patriotism, served through three campaigns and scarcely wrote on any other theme. In fact, the astonishing thing about it all is, that he was read with much avidity throughout Europe whilst he hardly wrote anything but IRELAND. To point out particulars were a task of despair, unless we consented, and the idea is not a bad one, to resolve ourselves into a Chautauqua Circle with Moore's works for the one subject of research. It is the fire of the passion of Irish patriotism that illuminates his every page. Of course, as a boy, he wrote some trash, which his amateur judgment amends for. "Few poets have sailed to Delphi without touching at Cythera." The spirit of Irish hospitality is the only apology we can offer for the composition of the "Prince's Day," and I am willing to concede it never ought have been written, but perfection is not to be looked for on earth and you and I are too well acquainted with practical life to institute such an inquisition first on a poet and then an Irishman. Still I say, the



THOMAS MOORE.

"The Poet of all circles and the Idol of his own."





more you familiarize yourself with Moore, the more will you become convinced that his patriotism was his all-absorbing, consuming passion. It was the sacred, inextinguishable fire that burned upon the holy mountain—

“Though fled the priest, the votary gone,  
Still did the mighty flame burn on  
Through shame and change, through good and ill,  
Like its own God’s eternal will,  
Deep, constant, bright, unquenchable ”

The truth is he could write nothing else. He failed in the composition of *LALLAH ROOKIE*, until his imagination clothed in the eastern garb his Irish conception. The four Oriental poems are only lengthened melodies in which the political and religious struggles of his own country are dramatized in Asia. “The Loves of the Angels” are grand allegories of the spiritual life. Hymns, poems, and at least one book which has made its author famous, “The Gates Ajar,” have sprung from suggestions in the “Loves of the Angels.” I have seen more severe criticism of these poems, but I cannot say that I ever discerned anything to admire in the mental structure of the critics. David and Solomon might well dread the effects of their productions upon such minds. Moore’s satirical writings produced an immense sensation. They flash with wit and wound like swords. His mind was like a diamond—it glittered at once and cut. Like most of his other writings, they were brought out in support of his own country, but if any statesman or political economist will peruse the productions to-day I promise him compensation in the fact that he will find so many of them applicable to the somewhat abnormal circumstances which just now surround us. Moore was never engaged in any composition depending on false idiom for wit or character. The stage representation of the Irishman, generally rendered by some idler from Vermont or Boston, passing off as “Pat Rooney” or “Larry O’Neill,” has had nothing to borrow from Moore. What has he done to divert from him the full tide of the admiration, love and gratitude of his countrymen? It is undeniable that his popularity has been waning since his death. Is it his success that man has come to harbor against him? It was indeed phenomenal, but was it not deserved?

“Perhaps he was not hero born,  
Like those he sung, Heaven only knows;  
He had the rose without the thorn,  
But he deserved the rose,  
For under its gentle light  
His heart was warm, his soul was strong;  
He kept his love of country bright  
And sung her sweetest songs ”

At the time that the meteoric Lord Byron was advancing, torch in hand, to the stage of English letters, when Scott, Rogers, Campbell, Crabbe, Southey, were rushing forward to divide the attention of the English-speaking world—*think* of the poor little fellow starting out from his home above the grocery store in Aungier street, with the “Odes of Anacreon” in his pocket and the few sovereigns and

scapular his pious mother had stitched into the waistband of his trousers, going forth alone to hostile, concerted, supercilious London and taking front rank amongst them all! Alone did I say? No, not alone, for God was with him, God and his own true heart! He has been accused of playing the sycophant because he placed himself in association with the great! Where were his associations to be, if he were to do any good? What evidence is there that he ever pawned his independence for aristocratic patronage? I have studied his life somewhat intently, and so far as I can discern, he played in this particular the rôle of the Irishman up to the letter, viz. when there was any patronizing to be done, he did it on the other fellow as the Prince of Wales and Duke of Wellington learned to their chagrin. The only reason he did not keep Leigh Hunt company in jail was that His Royal Highness did not dare incur the odium of such an act. The patronage of the Earl of Moira has been used to Moore's prejudice in some quarters. Lord Moira was one of the most distinguished soldiers and statesmen of his age. He supported the patriotic party in Ireland, being always on the side of Grattan and Charlemont. He promoted the Catholic claims, denounced the cruelties of 1798, and opposed the "Union." It was in repairing to his house to see his wife that Lord Edward Fitzgerald was set upon in Watling street, May 17th, '98, by officers of the Crown, whom, after a brisk encounter, he defeated, "himself against four." Next day he was captured after the terrific conflict with which you are all familiar. Surely there was nothing in this association to compromise Moore's principles! O'Connell retained respect for and confidence in him to the end of his life, as is shown by the fact that in 1852 he offered him the representation in Parliament of the city of Limerick, the tender being made by another Irish poet, the just and gentle Gerald Griffin. Moore declined, owing entirely to his circumstances, but records that were he to go to Parliament he would take the "Repeal Pledge," *confident though he was that it would lead to separation from England*.

Moore had been charged with being an "absentee" and living out of Ireland. Literature was his profession, and what market had he for it in Dublin? Has he no claim to justice at our hands? The incident I have already alluded to touching his last days and interment is alike susceptible of explanation. From 1846 or thereabout he showed increasing signs of decay of mental power, and as with Swift, Scott, Southey, O'Connell, and other literary veterans, softening of the brain steadily set in. The last three or four years of his life his intellect became quite clouded. No one but his wife so much as saw him the last two years of his life. This is the period fixed upon by the religious scandalmongers for his so-called apostasy. What other man was ever held accountable for the days he had passed in mental darkness? It is feared he was buried with a Protestant service of some kind, and poor Bessie was roundly rated for it by the Catholic journals of the day as "an outrage on her Catholic husband and an insult to Catholic Ireland." From all I have been able to find out regarding this thing, the charge has never been duly substantiated by even respectable hearsay evidence. He was buried very quietly in Bronham Churchyard, only three or four friends being in attendance. There were no Catholics and no Catholic church near Moore's residence for fifty or sixty years, and if, perchance, some service was read or some prayer offered at their dismal little

funeral, those few friends and poor Bessie undoubtedly thought they were doing the best they could. I certainly do not conceive that there was anything in these facts to cast a shadow of suspicion on the constancy of one who stood so manfully by his co-religionists amid their darkest hours, and has left so many imperishable monuments of his faith behind him. He was a regular attendant at mass in Warwick street chapel when in London, and so was his eldest son. Lord John Russell attests "that he lived and died a Catholic." He enjoyed the confidence of the Archbishops Murray, McFale, Dr. Doyle, O'Connell and all of the Catholic opinion in Ireland. While in England he was the intimate friend of Cardinal (Dr.) Wiseman and Dr. Lingard, and was invited by Wiseman to contribute articles on delicate ecclesiastical subjects in the Dublin Review. In dismissing this subject, I desire to say, as a priest and one whose intensity as a Catholic priest has never, I think, been questioned, that the longer I live the less respect I am learning to feel for that genius of Catholic who is forever coming forward with imputations like this upon prominent men, whose ambition and aim in life seems to be to read somebody out of the Church, and whose religious functions are exhausted, as is generally the case—in swooping around to determine *pro bono publico* whether someone else "made his Easter duties" or not. So far as I have observed, the eminent service these persons render to the Church is to deprive the membership of such men as Moore, Michand, Chateaubrand, Pope, Dryden and Boyle O'Reilly. It is to that class of animal that we owe, quite exclusively, the insinuations in circulation regarding Moore's religion, and he is twin-brother to that other ape who thought to deprive Ireland of him by impugning his patriotism. Religious and racial ghouls who unearth dead men's bones, but whose grimaces can only impose upon the ignorant. If Ireland had borrowed O'Connell from Spain; if she had caught Father Mathew from the skies; if France had given birth to her noblest son and named him Robert Emmett, and if Curran and Grattan had never been born, still I think that little island would be remembered for ages, and I think forever, as the birthplace and country of Thomas Moore.

Why, this man was greater than Columbus, for he faced more determined hostility and vanquished it with greater ease, he opened to the world a mental and spiritual continent which will be sought out by the oppressed of every clime till Time or Tyranny shall be no more, whilst the multitudes of the earth that claim an Irish ancestry in every land will continue to learn to love "Tom Moore" the more as the light of receding ages brightens his memory. When nations dissolve, their great men move behind a curtain that but few ever raise; when wars are over and the dashing soldier and great commander rest for fame in some historical catalogue or brief publication, then, as the psalms of David and songs of Solomon outlive the triumphs and the temples which they reared, so will the melodies of Moore resist the corroding marks of time and live, and still live on while the human soul retains emotion and Ireland raises her lofty peaks above the level of the sea. It is not within the scope of my purpose here to-night to discuss his poetry. I have disclaimed this intention at the beginning, though candidly I profess some slight pretensions thereon. He has many anniversaries yet to come. Let me say that I consider our failures to do justice to his memory due to the fact that we try to do too much at once. I honor intensely

the purpose of this association I commend to those who follow me the consideration of his merits, point by point. He is one of those men—those rare men—whom you cannot deal with biographically in one evening, he is a man whose writings you cannot condense. A great lawyer and literateur said to me some years ago, "I tried to lecture on Lallah Rookh, but it was like writing a brief upon Erskine—the condensing had all been done." I think any one who has studied Moore a little will see the virtue of this saying. He was too many sided to be dealt with once for all. It cannot be done; and the simple reason is that he was imbued so thoroughly with the spirit of his country, and comprehended so accurately the range of his subject, and lent his mind so exclusively to the condensation of it that no man thereafter can "draw a brief." He has written a book of poetic national gospels. What we have to do is study, contemplate and explain them. Therefore, this evening I have tried to confine myself to the one leading point—the salient feature of his character—that *he was an Irishman*. It is a worthy subject and I leave it in worthy hands. I hope that those who follow me will train the harpsichord and acquaint you with the power which he did not indeed create—but which he had the soul to appreciate—the power there is in Irish recollection and which lives in Irish music expressive of Irish life. And if, in that refined disquisition, you find as years go on that he was not, in all things and on every occasion, clear up to the type we have learned to love and to exact from our own alone—why, then, I will ask you with a tear to

"Blame not the bard, if in pleasure's soft dream

He has tried to forget what he never could heal,

Oh! give but a hope, let a vista but gleam

Through the gloom of his country, and mark how he'll feel;

That instant, his heart at her shrine would lay down

Every passion it nursed, every bliss it adored,

While the myrtle, now idly entwined with his crown

Like the wreath of Harmodius would cover his sword!"

Mr Parnell, a few years since, voiced a practical thought when he said in prospect of Ireland's independence that "she would need every man she had, be he Protestant or Catholic," and it seems to me, in view of the present state of affairs, that Ireland needs every man she ever had (excepting Castlereagh). We are not standing high in the world's estimation to-day, nor what is infinitely worse—in *our own*; nor do I think that our former prestige with ourselves, with the nations, will again be restored until Irish swords shall once again be lifted in battle. Our forensic ability, our parliamentary performances are all very well, but the world has had too much of them. The nations have ceased to think of us, we have almost ceased to think of ourselves, as the men not alone of lightning wits, but of lightning sabres, and I know of nothing better calculated to prepare us for that dread, but inevitable ordeal, which we have so often sustained before, than *the music of Ireland, the poetry of Moore*.



## A PLEA FOR IRELAND.

BY HON W BOURKE COCKRAN, M C

Wednesday evening, March 4, 1896, witnessed the most remarkable Nationalist demonstration ever held by the Irish people of New York City. In every respect it was a memorable meeting. One of the greatest of living orators delivered the speech of his life and the audience which listened to him was in numbers, intelligence and enthusiasm the finest that ever greeted an Irishman pleading Ireland's case before the civilized world.

The occasion was the celebration of the Robert Emmet anniversary by the Clan-na-Gael; the scene was the great hall of the Grand Central Palace, Lexington avenue, 43rd and 44th streets, the orator was William Bourke Cockran. There were over 10,000 people crowded into the hall, every available inch of space on the floor, the galleries and in the aisles being occupied, and the men and women there assembled were the *élite* of the Irish people of the Empire City. On the platform, in the boxes and the reserved seats were more distinguished Americans than ever before listened to an Irish orator. Men of national reputation on the bench, at the bar, in the pulpit—priests and ministers—in the medical profession, in commercial and public life, were there and vied with the seething mass of Irish people around them in the vigor and enthusiasm of their plaudits. They came to hear an eloquent tribute to the memory of Robert Emmet, they heard instead a vindication of the cause for which Emmet gave his life, an unanswerable arraignment of English rule, a masterly statement of Ireland's unalienable and indestructible right to govern herself.

It was a military as well as a civic display, and the prominence given to the fighting element by the organizers of the demonstration was significant of the present drift of opinion and of the new hopes born of England's thickening international difficulties. The First Regiment of Irish Volunteers, over 600 strong, under Colonel James Mojan, armed and fully equipped, lined the aisles and guarded the doors, and a finer body of Irish soldiers never shouldered rifle or stood in line. When the orator of the evening was escorted to the platform with thirty officers with drawn swords as a guard of honor, there was a scene of enthusiasm that will not soon be forgotten by those who witnessed it.

And to cap the climax of the military character of the display a distinguished Irish soldier of the American Civil War, General James R. O'Beirne—as fine a type of physical manhood as ever left the shores of Ireland—was chairman of the meeting and opened the proceedings with a short, but eloquent speech, explaining the aims and objects of the Clan-na-Gael and asserting Ireland's right to recover her freedom by the same means as brought the great Republic of the West into existence. The meeting did not inaugurate any "new movement," but it demonstrated that the old Clan-na-Gael is still full of a vigorous vitality and entering on a new era of progress and energetic prosecution of the old struggle with England.

Among the prominent people present were Supreme Court Judges J. O. Dyckman, Martin J. Keogh, Morgan J. O'Brien, Frederick Smyth, Judges Leonard J. Gegeenoh, Calvin E. Piatt, J. P. Bernard, William J. Gaynor, Judges Clement, James Fitzgerald, Van Hoesen,



ex-Lieut.-Governor William F. Sheehan, John C. Sheehan, ex-Judge Edward Browne, Richard S. Emmet, Fordham Morris, Chauncey J. Secor, Congressman Fairchild of Port Chester, State Comptroller Roberts, John E. Milholland, Thomas Costigan, Dr. Gregory Costigan.

Fully a hundred priests were in the audience. Among those noticed in the front seats were Rev. Dr. McDonald, D. D., Rev. Fr. Scott, Rev. R. J. O'Keefe, Rev. Fr. Doyle, Rev. Fr. Wallace, Rev. Fr. Harrigan, Rev. Fr. Dougherty, Rev. Fr. Powers.

Every member of the Clan-na-Gael in the city and vicinity not detained by duty elsewhere was present. All the old-timers were on hand and the young blood which is fast pushing to the front was fully represented. Among those known outside of New York were Chairman R. J. Kennedy of the Committee of Arrangements, Henry V. Doyle of Yonkers, County Clerk John M. Digney of White Plains, Assemblyman John King of Passaic, N. J., Assemblyman Trainor of New York City, John J. Rossiter of Newark, James F. Gallagher of Brooklyn, John Conway, John Devoy, Edward O'Flaherty, Michael Breslin, National Delegate Haggerty, A. O. H. (Board of Erin), State Secretary Terence Donohue, Capt. James S. Treacy, James O'Sullivan, John Timmons, Wm. Leonard, John Kenny, Bernard F. McCabe, Timothy Breslin, James McCarthy, Michael Ledwith, P. F. Higgins, Edward Quinell, Frank Mellin, Wm. R. McCauley, Patrick J. Conway, Denis Kerwick, Michael T. Sharkey, James G. Dyer, T. J. Smith, Luke C. Quinn, P. J. Connolly, Lieut.-Col. Edward Duffy and Major McCathal of the 69th Regt. and many others.

General O'Beirne in introducing the orator of the evening made a strong and eloquent speech explaining the aims and objects of the Clan-na-Gael. He was vigorously applauded throughout.

#### BOURKE COCKRAN'S GREAT SPEECH.

Mr. Cockran was received with an outburst of enthusiasm such as is seldom witnessed, the vast audience rising to its feet and waving hats and handkerchiefs. When the applause had subsided he spoke as follows:

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen. I have recently heard it proclaimed, and we all have heard it proclaimed, with vociferous unanimity, by the supporters of the present English Government, that the Irish National movement was dead. If any person, friend or foe, has been misled by that statement, a glimpse of this meeting would dispel his misapprehensions, and at the same time enable him to appreciate the depth of those springs from which Irish patriotism is fed.

As we survey this meeting we realize that the soil which has been stained with the blood of patriots is sown with dragon's teeth, and will yet yield armed men to strike vehement blows at the power of the tyrant. (Applause.) As we realize that all over the world similar gatherings are applauding the same sentiments, singing the same songs, honoring the same memory, we know that Robert Emmet, in his grave, is a more powerful force for Irish emancipation than scried hosts in the field. (Applause.) In this aspect this celebration is without parallel among the solemnities or festivals of mankind. It awak-

ens memories which are corroding, it inspires hopes which are sublime, it recalls a tragedy unutterably sad, it expresses a purpose inflexibly stern, it typifies the history of a long-suffering people, it proves the indestructible vitality of an indomitable race (Applause.)

We celebrate the birth of a martyr, but the tears that moisten the eyes as we think of his fate are dried on the cheeks of Irishmen by the burning resolutions which they form above his grave (Applause.) And as we hear the thunders of applause that sweep through this hall, while every breeze that blows across the Atlantic is laden with messages of sympathy to the Irish race, we know that the interest of the world is awakened on this anniversary. We know that in murdering Emmet the foreign tyrant showed the extent of his cruelty and the limit of his power. He was able to kill the patriot, but he was unable to destroy the race from which he sprung, the soil on which he lived, or the cause for which he died (Applause.) We know that the attempt to blacken his memory has failed, we know that the judgment of felony which was rendered against him in the English court has been reversed by the judgment of mankind (cries of "Hear, hear!"); that the infamy of his sentence fell only on those who pronounced it, that the rope which strangled him changed the suffering patriot into the glorious martyr and the gallows on which he died has become the pedestal of an imperishable fame (Applause.) The story of Robert Emmet's fate is, perhaps, the saddest page among human records, yet his life is the most inspiring study in the whole range of human biography.

His execution was not merely a crime of singular atrocity; it was a blunder of unparalleled stupidity. Emmet dying at twenty-four has accomplished ten thousand times more than could have been achieved by Emmet living for a hundred years. The spectacle of a virtuous youth climbing the steps of the gallows, of an orator, whose genius should have rendered immense service to mankind, strangled by the English hangman, of a patriot, the purity of whose motives never had been questioned, butchered in cold blood, revealed to the world as no rhetoric could have described it, the atrocious character of a system founded in crime and maintained in injustice, which had rewards for the corrupt and punishments for the pure, which bestowed coronets upon traitors and the rope on patriots; which raised Norbury to the peerage and sent Emmet to the gallows. (Applause.)

Of Emmet's life, of his personal virtues, of his intellectual attainments, of his romantic love, of his patriotic purposes, we may not speak to-night. Standing at the verge of his grave, while pronouncing the inspired words which, by attracting the attention of the world to his country, have made Ireland's cause the cause of civilization, he forbade any one to write his epitaph until his country should have taken her place among the nations of the earth. His prohibition to write his epitaph carries with it the prohibition to pronounce his eulogy. The respect, the affection, the love, the reverence, which every Irishman cherishes in his bosom for the memory of Emmet must remain without expression until the foundation of his monument can be laid in the free soil of an emancipated Ireland (Applause.) But though we may not pronounce his eulogy, the suggestion of the distinguished gentleman who presides here to-night is singularly apposite. We may consider how far Irishmen have discharged the trust which he has committed to their hands, we may measure the distance which still separates Ireland from those happier conditions under which

Emmet's monument may be raised to heaven amid the enthusiastic applause of his own race and amid the respectful sympathy of the civilized world

What, then, is the condition of Ireland to-day? Is the boast of her enemies well founded, that the Irish National movement is dead, that there is not sufficient patriotic spirit among the Irish people even to compel a union of the warring factions into which the Parliamentary party has degenerated? Now, bear in mind that I criticise no man or set of men. At this distance it is impossible to say whether these quarrels, which we all deplore, are chargeable to any one faction, or whether they spring from conditions to which all factions have contributed. I content myself with stating the indisputable fact that factions do exist, that the strength of the party in Parliament has been weakened by them and that English statesmen have been encouraged by these divisions to contemptuously reject Ireland's petition for redress. Thus we have seen, within a few days in the House of Commons, a Home Rule amendment rejected by a majority of 115. We have seen a petition for the release of the political prisoners and several other measures for the relief of the Irish people rejected by about the same vote. And yet, notwithstanding these discouraging circumstances, I decline to regard this Parliamentary majority as any indication even of English opinion to-day. I do not believe that the defeat of the Liberal party at the polls, the induction into office of a Tory government, backed by a large Tory majority, are insuperable obstacles in the pathway of Irish progress, but, with proper leadership, I believe they may be made the stepping stone by which Ireland can climb to independence. (Applause)

It is frequently said that, in all discussions of Irish questions by Irishmen, there is such a tendency to rhetorical exaggeration that their statements do not furnish solid foundations for safe conclusions. Deeply sensible, therefore, that accuracy and moderation of statement are of vital importance to the value of anything which I may say, I express the belief that within the lifetime of this generation the emancipation of Ireland will be an accomplished fact, because invincible forces are working to accomplish it. (Applause) Now, I base that belief, first, on my conviction that England herself will soon realize that her own pathway to safety, amid the dangers and perils which encompass her, lies through a policy of reparation and justice to Ireland, and, second, on my belief that if England remains blind to her own interests, and deaf to the voice of justice, then the civilized world will compel her to make that reparation which an enlightened policy would prompt her to make spontaneously and freely. (Applause)

We see the whole world united to-day in a spirit of hostility and opposition to England, which not only prevents any extension of her influence and power, but which actually threatens the integrity of her empire. But a few weeks ago, when the President of the United States intervened in a dispute between her and a South American republic (applause) with whose boundaries, I do not believe, one of our citizens in ten thousand was familiar, the American people with one voice rose in support of his action, and his message to Congress was the most popular measure in his whole administration. (Applause) The German Emperor cast diplomatic etiquette to the winds in his haste to express satisfaction at the defeat of an English marauding force which had invaded a South African republic. (Ap-

plause) Wherever she has attempted to extend her power, there the world has arisen in protest against it. (Cries of "Hear! hear!") Now, why is England universally disliked? Why stands she encircled, by the confession of her own statesmen, with enemies everywhere? Why is she overhung with a black cloud of distrust, from which at any moment may leap the lightning flash of destructive war? It is because she has violated the moral law. It is because she stands discredited before the world by her treatment of Ireland; it is because the world judges of her policy by its fruits, and where they see ruin, desolation and hatred among the governed, they know the government must be oppressive, tyrannical and unjust. (Applause.) In vain she boasts that Canada is loyal, that Australia is attached to the British Crown. The world knows that in these countries she is jealously excluded from any participation in their internal affairs, and that her part in their government is simply to provide for their defense against foreign aggression. But in Ireland, where her control of the government is complete, absolute and unchallenged the world sees the fruits of her policy to weaker and dependent nations, and judges her by them. As they behold the severity with which every display of natural feeling is suppressed in the one place where she has been able to proscribe patriots, American citizens feel that if the fortunes of war had delivered these colonies helpless into her power, she would have cemented her conquest of them by the blood of the patriotic and the brave; that here, too, she would have made the hangman the exponent of her policy, and the gibbet the bulwark of her authority. (Applause)

Now, this universal hatred of England, which defeats her diplomacy, thwarts her policy and threatens her interests everywhere, is not the work of Irishmen. They have contributed to it, but they have not made it. It rests on a broader foundation than Irish resentment for English oppression. It rests upon the hatred of injustice which is instinctive among civilized men. It rests upon the opposition to tyranny for its own sake, no matter what the theatre on which that tyranny may have been displayed. (Applause) Does anybody suppose that if a question under the Monroe Doctrine arose between this country and France or Germany or Russia, the people of the United States would show a passionate eagerness for war with either of those countries? America will maintain the Monroe Doctrine against any country in the world, or all the countries in the world combined (applause); but while she would maintain it, if occasion arose, against these other countries with firmness, every person in the United States would regret and deplore a condition which might embroil us with them. Does anybody suppose that if England to-day stood before the world exercising a beneficent influence everywhere, using all the power of her immense capital to promote the welfare of all the people who speak her language, that it would be popular in the United States to threaten her security? Does anybody believe that if Mr Gladstone's Home Rule bill had become a law and England to-day were loyally engaged in an effort to bury the wretched recollections of centuries under new measures of reparation, and to open up before the people of both countries a future of peace, of promise and of prosperity, that the American people would welcome a war that would interrupt the recuperative progress of the Irish people? (Applause.) When we reflect on what England's condition is, owing to this policy of ruin in Ireland, and what her condition might be, if, with clean hands, she



stood before the world upon the services which she has rendered to humanity elsewhere, is it extravagant or unreasonable to express the hope that some time or other even Englishmen will realize that injustice does not pay, and that reparation must be made for every violation of the moral law by nations as well as by individuals. (Applause)

But assuming that England does not of her own accord and for her own sake adopt that policy of justice in which she will find her own security, then I believe that the civilized world will make the cause of Ireland the cause of civilization. Ireland, by the political conditions under which she was compelled to exist, is unable to make the contribution to the sum of human wealth which the natural genius of her people and the natural advantages of her soil show that Providence intended she should make. Just as soon as civilization understands that the paralysis of Irish industry is due to political causes, those causes will be overthrown. The question will then no longer be a question between Ireland and England, but between England and the whole civilized world. The growth of inventions, the spread of intelligence, has led men to realize that their interests are not bounded by their geographical frontiers, that every man who toils and breathes is interested in the condition of every foot of the earth's surface. Everything that affects the supply of commodities in the world affects you and affects me. Every ear of corn that is produced by the earth affects the price of bread to you and to me and to every human being in all the world. The exercise of my trade concerns not me alone and depends not alone on me. If I be engaged in the manufacture of tables, I cannot proceed with my work until I secure tools and lumber, which must be prepared by other hands, and as I must exchange the product of my labor for the things which I need, I must sell my tables for the clothes that will keep me warm, for the shoes that will protect my feet, the food that will nourish me, the roof which will shelter me. I am, therefore, deeply interested in the production of wool, the preparation of hides, the quarrying of stone, the garnering of corn, the felling of trees everywhere upon the globe. No one man stands alone.

Each one depends upon all the others. Whatever swells the supply of commodities in one place, stimulates industrial activity elsewhere. An increase in production anywhere, whether it comes from better natural conditions, a more intelligent cultivation of the soil, or the reduction to cultivation of lands formerly left untilled, increases the price of labor and stimulates prosperity everywhere. A large crop means that more houses must be built to store it, it means that more lines of railroad must be constructed to accommodate it, it means that more ships must be used to transport it, and more machinery to manufacture it, it means a larger demand for labor and consequently an increase in the rate of wages. On the other hand, where from natural or political causes there is a diminished production anywhere, it means that empty cars will be switched upon side tracks; that idle ships will be tied to docks; that the manufacturer will reduce his output everywhere; laborers will be discharged and the rate of wages will fall. Thus we see the interests of the whole world are closely intertwined. The farmer at his plow in the Minnesota wheat field, the weaver at the English loom, the mechanic in the German workshop, the laborer in the French vineyard, the sailor climbing the masthead upon the Atlantic billow, the diver exploring the sunken wreck, the carrier who transports a crop to market, the clerk who keeps an account of it, the



merchant who sells it, the consumer who buys it—each depends on all the others for the reward of his industry—all are elements in one mighty scheme of industrial co-operation, which we call commerce, and commerce is civilization. (Applause.)

Political institutions which prevent a country with great natural advantages from contributing to the industrial resources of mankind are a bar to human progress, the overthrow of which is essential to the prosperity of the world. Ireland, with a fertile soil, instead of being an active agent in promoting the comfort of man, is a mendicant in the family of nations. The effect of Ireland's exclusion from active participation in the industrial co-operation of men may be measured in some degree, by considering the results to us here, if France or Germany should suddenly become sterile and unproductive, or, if its contribution to our commerce should be reduced one-half. If our trade with France, for instance, were seriously diminished, land in this city would decline in value, the price of everything elsewhere would decline, vast numbers of laborers would be discharged, the humblest toiler would find his means of sustenance imperiled, and the proudest millionaire would be on the brink of ruin. The world can easily understand what would be the effect on its condition if France or Germany or England or any of the great productive nations were reduced to industrial prostration, and the world will some day learn what it loses by Ireland's failure to contribute to the sum of human wealth all that its fertile soil could produce and all that the wonderful commercial genius of its people could accomplish, if they were afforded the protection of free institutions. (Applause.) The apologists for English rule in Ireland realize that a government which blights the prosperity of the governed is indefensible, and they attempt to tell us that Ireland's condition is not due to political causes; that it is due to some inherent vice or defect in the Irish character. If that assertion were true, two conclusions would necessarily flow from it. It would prove, first, that the Irish race was worthless, and that it would be a gain to the world if they were sunk under the Atlantic. But, even if that be so, it would only furnish an additional reason why England, for her own sake, should abandon any further attempt to control a government which she could not administer successfully. Whatever Ireland's condition may be, England controls her government. Now, by the declaration of England's representative body, when King James II was driven from the country, the basis of loyalty to the throne was declared to be the reciprocal obligation of the King to protect the subject, that is to say, the business of government was to protect the governed. The merits of a government are to be judged by the condition of the governed. If, therefore, England's contention be true, that this deplorable industrial condition of Ireland is due to causes which can neither be remedied nor mitigated by government, then the quicker she leaves the island the better for her own reputation, and we will take the chances on its being better for Ireland. (Applause.)

But, ladies and gentlemen, the statement is not true. The conditions which have produced Ireland's industrial prostration are as plain and as easily ascertained as anything within the experience of mankind; Ireland's industrial condition is due to her political conditions. While they continue she can never recover prosperity. It is idle to talk of beneficial legislation, idle to talk of remedial measures by an English Parliament. The cause of Ireland's industrial decay

is an alien government, and while an alien government lasts, that decay must always be progressive, growing worse from day to day (Applause) Bearing always in mind the necessity for moderation of statement, let us look at the nature of English rule in Ireland, according to English authorities, and the ruin of the Irish people will be at once explained. The true reason for Ireland's prostration is lack of capital. Without capital production is impossible. Under her present political conditions Ireland every year is drained of the capital essential to industrial activity, and while those conditions exist it is plain that the drain must continue.

Now if I may again use the table before me by way of illustration let us assume that I am still engaged in the manufacture of tables. Without capital I can do nothing. Capacity or willingness to work will of itself avail me nothing. To make my labor effective I must have lumber and I must have tools. But labor and tools are capital. Whatever a person works on or works with is capital. Labor in connection with capital makes wealth. If I have sufficient tools and lumber to produce five hundred tables in a year, and four hundred be sufficient to support me, it follows that I will have one hundred tables left over, and those one hundred tables, or the proceeds of them, will be available next year to increase my productive capacity. With them I may buy new machinery, I may buy new tools, or I may hire extra help, and the following year my production will be so far increased that I may produce six hundred tables. If my wants remain the same, I will then have two hundred tables with which to still further broaden the scope of my industry. Each successive year will witness a still larger addition to my product, and consequently my productive efficiency will steadily increase. Now, the capital of a country is the sum of the capital owned by all the individuals who constitute its population. It is that portion of its product which is left over after the wants of all the people have been supplied. Under normal conditions, under honest government, that capital, year after year is a growing quantity, and as it grows it takes the form of houses, of fences, of machinery, of locomotives, of live stock and of all the elements of property which constitute prosperity, and which are essential to the development of new and diversified industries.

In Ireland, since the conquest, there has never been an opportunity for capital to grow. In the beginning the conquest was simply pillage. The Norman invaders were granted lands, not for the purpose of conciliating the Irish race, but for the purpose of exterminating them. Those of them who settled upon the soil yielded to that extraordinary fascination which the Irish people have always exercised over those who came in direct contact with them. They married Irish wives, they spoke the Irish language, they adopted Irish customs—they become more Irish than the Irish themselves. (Applause) Against that irresistible tendency to assimilation with the natives the whole power and policy of England were steadily exercised. Thus, in the reign of King Richard II, a statute was passed by which any member of the English colony was absolutely prohibited from marrying an Irish woman, and every English family was prohibited from putting a child to foster with an Irish family. When repressive statutes, threats and rewards all proved unavailing to keep the two races apart, the torch of destruction was kindled, the sword of war was drawn, and a ruthless persecution was instituted against the English

settlers as well as against the native Irish. These wars were not contests such as were engaged in by civilized men.

From purely English sources they have been characterized as more bloodthirsty than any which disgraced any tribe of savages that ever fed upon the bodies of their victims. (Applause.) Thus, during Elizabeth's war against the Geraldines, English authorities tell us the whole Province of Munster was laid waste, so that the lowing of a cow could not be heard within its limits, and Spenser, the author of the "Faerie Queene," says that the people were reduced to such awful starvation that at night they escaped from the woods and morasses in which they had taken refuge from the English armies during the day to feed upon decaying carrion. During her war against O'Neill, Essex, who conducted himself like a civilized soldier, was withdrawn from command and sent to the scaffold—sent to the scaffold for his clemency—sent to the scaffold because he observed the laws of civilized war—and Mountjoy was placed at the head of the English forces in Ulster. According to his own reports, according to English authorities, he deliberately destroyed every living thing in the province—burning every blade of grass down to the sod. Thus, at the end of the sixteenth century, we find Ireland's industrial condition worse than it was in the eleventh.

The capital available to-day in England and in Germany and in France for the productive energies of these countries has been the accumulation of many centuries. The volume of its capital always bears a proportion to the tranquillity which each country has enjoyed and to the commercial capacities of its people. Those 500 years, which in other countries were years of advancement, years of preparation for the great industrial development of the nineteenth century, in Ireland were years of devastation, years of destruction, years of retrogression, years which prepared the conditions from which she is suffering to-day—yet Englishmen tell us that Ireland's distress is not the result of political conditions. But England's hostility to Ireland did not end with Elizabeth. It did not end with the massacre of Munster or the pillage of Ulster. After her death James the First initiated the scheme of confiscations, which thenceforward became the settled policy of England. Taking advantage of what is known as the "Flight of the Earls," he claimed that the whole of Ulster belonged to them, seized their lands on an accusation of treason and settled them with Scotch families. Cromwell adopted that policy and amplified it. He confiscated all the lands lying east of the Shannon, after he had put the people of the most populous cities in the country to the sword and moved the whole native Irish population west of the Shannon. William the Third took almost every acre that had been restored to the native Irish under Charles the Second's act of settlement; and the penal laws of Queen Anne, by prohibiting any Catholic from owning land or even from renting it, except for a very brief term of years, resulted in transferring the whole soil of Ireland to strangers. These grants were made in huge tracts to comparatively few individuals. They were granted to some for services rendered in the field, to some as a reward for persecutions of the Irish, to others for causes which cannot be described before this assemblage. The beneficiaries of these grants did not take with them any idea of settling on the land, and cultivating it. They continued to live in England. They allowed the original owners to come back and occupy the land as tenants at will.

Everything which the soil produced, except the barest pittance allowed for the support of the tenant, was confiscated in the form of rents. The Irish soil is held to-day by titles based on this system of confiscation. The landlords were absentees when the lands were granted to them, they are absentees now. The product of Irish industry has not been reinvested in the soil, but for over two hundred years has been taken abroad and used to support the state of English castles or the opulence of residences in London. It has been dissipated and squandered in the haunts of folly and vice; and while the political system remains which has produced these economic conditions, no remedy for them is possible. But that is not all. Ireland suffers to-day not only from alien ownership of the land, but from the consequences of trade laws so barbarously unjust that it is difficult to believe they ever formed a feature of the legislation of a Christian country. (Applause.) When English critics say that Ireland is incapable of industrial progress, they do violence to all the facts of history as attested by their own historians. Wherever Ireland has had the benefit of equal conditions, she has defied industrial competition. In the three great elements of industry—agriculture, ship-building and woolen manufactures—Ireland during the seventeenth century fairly outstripped England. Irish cattle and horses commanded the highest prices in the English market, when, by a statute of King Charles II, their exportation to England was positively prohibited, and all the Irish capital invested in that form of agriculture, was destroyed almost in a night. I think the actual figures to which it was reduced was one-seventh of its former volume. The Irish people in the seventeenth century had outstripped the English in ship-building. The Irish fishermen were the hardest sailors that sailed the deep. The carrying trade of the world was largely maintained in Irish vessels, and particularly the carrying trade to these colonies, when suddenly Ireland was exempted from the operation of the navigation laws, which meant that no cargo could be taken into an Irish harbor until it had first been sent to an English port and then transhipped in an English bottom. It is needless to say that the budding Irish ship-building industry perished under this treatment as the blossoms perish under a frost. The woolen industry, as far back as the time of King Charles I, was the strongest industry of its kind in Europe. Irish wool was the best for woolen manufactures that was raised anywhere in the world.

In the reign of William III. an act was passed absolutely prohibiting woolen manufactures in Ireland. Remember this was not a mere protective measure, shutting Irish woolen manufactures out of the English markets. It was a direct, positive, brutal prohibition from all manufacture, and added to it was a clause which prohibited the Irish from exporting wool to any country in the world except England. It was supposed that the Irish farmer would, of course, go on raising wool, and it was believed that this legislation, by compelling him to send it to the English market, would force him to sell it to the English manufacturer at any price which that manufacturer chose to put upon it. The demand for Irish wool, however, was active in France and in the low countries. The Irish farmer, prohibited by law from selling his wool where he could obtain the best price for it, proceeded in spite of the law to sell it in the most advantageous markets. The result was a gigantic system of smuggling. The whole trade of Ireland became contraband. But a contraband trade cannot avail itself



of those systems of exchange by which a cargo of commodities sent to one port can be exchanged for commodities in a far distant city. Of course, I need not explain to this audience that under the operation of commercial customs and trade laws, if I sell a cargo of corn in the city of New York to a Liverpool merchant, I get paid for it by a draft on London, and with that draft I can buy a cargo of Japanese curiosities in Tokio. Thus, without leaving the city of New York, and without sending anything to Japan, I can exchange my commodities against Japanese products. But the Irish, who during all this period were unable to use bills of exchange because their trade was contraband, were driven to a simple system of barter.

The only commodities for which they could exchange their wool in France were wines and spirits. For every cargo of wool that went out a cargo of spirits was returned. The use of liquor grew enormously under such conditions, because increase of supply always increases consumption. The poor, always quick to imitate the example of their wealthier neighbors, unable to obtain the finer liquors imported from France, were soon gratified by a coarser article manufactured at home. Commerce cannot be long maintained by a system of barter, and in time this contraband trade declined and perished, but not until it had established that reign of intemperance throughout Ireland which has cursed her for the last 200 years. (Applause) And when Englishmen tell us, as they do, when they taunt us with the reproach that the only substantial returns which Ireland makes to the imperial exchequer are the proceeds of the whiskey-tax, we can say to them if the curse of this intemperance be Ireland's the shame of it is England's. (Applause)

Now, let any man familiar with the first principles of political economy explain to me how trade can revive in a country where manufactures have been suppressed throughout the period during which in other countries they contributed to these accumulations of capital on which their industries now depend, where the political conditions exhaust the soil of everything that it produces, where the absentee landlord and the alien government draw from the people in the forms of rent and taxation everything in the nature of a surplus product. The laws and the government of Ireland would reduce any country in the world to poverty and distress. As we consider the ferocious spirit in which they were conceived, the pitiless cruelty with which they were enforced, we marvel not at the poverty of Ireland but at the survival of the Irish race. Looking at that picture, and realizing the steady advance of civilization throughout the world, I feel persuaded the government whose existence is an injury and whose laws are an outrage upon a helpless people will not be permitted to continue indefinitely. (Applause)

It is said—and said with truth—that during the period which I have described, Ireland had a separate Parliament, and that many of those restrictive and penal laws to which I have referred were enacted by the Irish Parliament. But it must be remembered, in the first place, that until 1782 the Irish Parliament was not an independent body, and, in the second place, it never was a representative body. As far back as the time of King Henry the Seventh, by a law which was known as Poyning's act, the Irish Parliament was prohibited from passing any measure until the heads of it had been approved by the English Council, and in the reign of King George the English Parliament claimed the right to legislate directly for Ireland at its dis-



cretion With these two acts controlling the Irish Parliament it is plain that its powers of legislation were too limited to merit serious discussion

The Irish Parliament, moreover, was never elected by the Irish people It was elected by what is known as the English colony in Ireland, which amounted to about one-fifth of the whole population. It was composed of landlords whose title to their lands depended upon these confiscations which have been the root of Ireland's misery. Their interests, their faith, their prejudices, were all supposed to set them firmly against the Irish people, and to make them a bulwark of English authority Yet that alien legislature yielded to the same influence which had formerly made Irish patriots out of Norman conquerors, and ultimately became a patriotic body Behind the guns of the volunteers they demanded legislative independence for Ireland (Applause) England conceded to fear what she had refused to justice. Poyning's act, and the act of George the First, were both repealed, and from out of the wreck and ruin, the misery and darkness of centuries, a new Ireland emerged, glorious, resplendent, facing the future calmly, confident, saluted in the old Parliament House on College Green with the words "Esto Perpetua" from the lips of Henry Grattan (Applause)

Nothing in history, nothing in the pages of the Arabian Nights describing sudden changes from poverty to affluence equals the transformation which clothed Ireland in a garb of radiant prosperity immediately after her independence was recognized Everywhere new factories started into existence Everywhere labor was actively employed The fields cultivated with spirit yielded generous harvests to hopeful industry. Dublin became a capital of refinement, of opulence and of elegance The Parliament itself became a theatre in which statesmanship exhibited its resources, while its debates adorned by the eloquence of Grattan and of Flood, of Plunkett and of Ponsonby, of Hussey-Burgh and of Curran were an intellectual display which dazzled that generation, and which left monuments of exceeding beauty to fascinate forever the students of English literature. (Applause) I shall not attempt to describe the industrial revival which accompanied the recognition of Irish independence Suffice it to say that in the eighteen years during which it lasted, notwithstanding a bloody rebellion, notwithstanding a massacre of the people in which were sacrificed the lives of sixty or seventy thousand persons, notwithstanding a heavy tide of emigration from political persecutions, the population of Ireland actually doubled Yet thoughtless people, echoing the baseless English slander, say that the Irish are not fit for self-government Show me in all the history of the world fruits of independence and liberty equal to these A country which had lain prostrate in the dust for nearly eight centuries, a country which had been ravaged first by Dane then by Norman, a country whose manufactures had been suppressed, a country which for generations had been deprived of the products of her soil by foreign landlords—at the first dawn of liberty sprang to her feet, and during eighteen years stood before the world, a living industrial force of wonderful achievement and still more wonderful promise The economic value of freedom to Ireland was not more strikingly shown by the fruits of independence than by the consequences of political enslavement The industrial revival, which followed 1782, was arrested in 1801—the commercial prosperity of the country was para-

lyzed by the Act of Union. Since the loss of her independence Ireland has been steadily declining and decaying, morally and materially. The restoration of her liberty is the only remedy that will restore her prosperity. (Applause)

It is often said that the condition of Ireland is beyond the comprehension of ordinary men, yet I may state as a fact, which no man who examines the subject will question, that if the same political conditions existed in Long Island or in the most thriving section of New York State, or in the fertile valley of the Scioto, where the rising river fertilizes the fields every year without any exercise of human labor, a condition of distress and industrial prostration would overtake these favored regions as bad as that which afflicts Ireland, for the inevitable fruits of an alien government are ruin and decay.

It is a mistake to assume, as English apologists tell us, that the Irish people are attempting to establish a separate government. Ireland has a separate government now. There never was a union of governments between England and Ireland. (Applause.) The Government of Ireland is now and always has been entirely separate from the Government of Great Britain. A separate Executive exists in Dublin Castle. The jurisdiction of the English courts does not run to Ireland. Ireland has a separate judiciary, a separate system of laws, a separate system of local government, a separate system of taxation. Irishmen demand the control of that government, and they will never be satisfied until they have secured it. (Applause.) They demand that laws affecting Ireland shall be framed by a Parliament sitting in Ireland. They demand that these laws shall be administered by an executive sworn to protect Irish interests, to promote Irish industry, to defend Irish independence. (Applause.) While the government of Ireland is administered in England, every motive that can animate the human mind operates to draw from Ireland the capital which it produces—the very flower of its moral and intellectual forces. Every man, who is in any way interested in the operation of the government, whether it be in the construction of a bridge across a river, in the improvement of a harbor, in the administration of a custom house, in the establishment of a post-office, and who wishes to make personal representations to the authorities, must spend more or less time in England, and thus contribute to the growth and opulence of London. A young man anxious to secure a field in which to display his talent, must go to the seat of government, where the prizes of intellectual competitions are to be won—toward which all interests are inevitably drawn. If a man be a worthless and vicious member of the absentee landlord class, he will naturally take up his residence in those cities where life is made attractive to the profligate and amusing to the idle. Thus ambition and idleness, industry and profligacy, vice and virtue, all combine to draw from Ireland the product of her soil, and the men of talent for whose capacity she can furnish no field, on whose industry she can bestow no reward. (Applause.) How can prosperity be revived under such conditions? What prospect but one of misery can ever confront the Irish people while they are held in subjection to a government which could not be just if it tried to be?

The best government that ever existed within the limits of its own country, when it extends its authority to another nation, against the protest of that nation, becomes by that act oppressive, confiscatory, unjust, immoral, reprehensible and indefensible. (Applause.) Na-

tions are like families, for a nation is but the aggregation of the families that constitute it. Now, will anybody pretend that it would be a justifiable system of laws which would allow a member of one family to interfere with the affairs of another family? The very essence of the family relation is the right to control its own private affairs. Will anybody pretend that because one man may be successful in business, or skillful in the management of the young, it would be justifiable for that reason to allow him to control the family affairs of another man less capable perhaps to instruct his children or less prosperous in his worldly affairs? Suppose the English Colonial Secretary to be more affectionate in his disposition, more capable in business matters than the Prime Minister, could anybody on that ground defend a law that would authorize Mr. Chamberlain to interfere in the management of Lord Salisbury's family? (Hisses) Now, what would be immoral and improper in the government of families is more immoral and more improper in the government of nations, for it extends a vicious principle over a wider area.

A government that operates outside of its own country cannot possibly be beneficent. In the nature of things it cannot be efficient.

All law is but public opinion. No law is enforceable that does not conform to the customs and the opinions of the people affected by it. But where the body which legislates for a country sits in another country it cannot understand and therefore it cannot obey the opinion of the people who will be affected by its enactments. It therefore lacks the first essential capacity for effective legislation. The Legislature of one country can no more legislate properly for another country than an organ in the human body can operate effectively if it be displaced.

To say that a country can be prosperous with its affairs administered in a city outside of its limits is as absurd as to say that a man could be prudent and healthy if his brains were outside of his head. (Laughter and applause) Now, we have heard it said recently that Mr. Balfour contemplates a measure of comprehensive relief to the Irish people. (Hisses) I think it has been prophesied that it would be a very generous measure. Now, no government can be generous and just at the same time. A government can bestow nothing of its own, because it can create nothing. A government cannot create a blade of grass, it cannot make a table out of lumber, it cannot form a chair out of wood. What it gives it must take. Where, therefore, it is generous to one person, it must be oppressive to another. The most that the best government can do is justice. But an alien government cannot even be just, because if it ever rose to the plane where justice would control its operations its very first application of its own principles would be to abolish itself. (Laughter) A government which is administered in a foreign city, not being subject to the opinion of the country whose welfare its legislation affects, is a monstrosity in this age. It is not necessary to condemn each act of its existence in order to condemn the principle that underlies it. It is sufficient to say that it is an alien institution to render its existence indefensible, its operation as unjustifiable as an attempt by one man to correct the child of another man.

We have often heard it said that the Irish are not obedient to law. Why should they be obedient to it? (Applause and laughter) No law has ever commanded respect unless it was founded upon justice. There has not been a law enacted in Ireland in nearly seven



centuries that was conceived in justice. During that period every enactment of the English Government was deliberately framed for the purpose of injuring Irish interests, and avowedly so. The English rulers have never made any pretense that they were administering the government of Ireland in the interest of the governed. They acknowledge that the whole scope and purpose of their policy was repression of trade and of national feeling. Injustice framed in statutes does not become justice. Laws framed by an alien body may be executed by force, but they have no moral binding effect upon the people of another country. Suppose a neighbor forced his way into the house of a parent in order to chastise his son. No matter what that son may have done, the supreme impulse of the parent would be to defend the integrity of his family and to eject the intruder. By that time that the process of ejection was complete, it is not likely the head of the household would have much desire or energy left for disciplinary purposes in his own family. (Laughter.) His resentment at the attempt of an intruder to usurp his powers over his child would make the father indulgent to his off-spring, even though, under other circumstances, he would be prompt to punish him. The whole history of Ireland is the history of another country attempting to administer its justice, attempting to make its laws, intruding into its family affairs. Every impulse that animates the human breast rises in revolt against usurpation, whatever form it may assume, and the very spirit of independence, which is the safest bulwark of order, makes the Irishman not the enemy of natural law, but the enemy of English law. (Applause.)

I have thought it wise to place before this audience, and so far as I may, before the American people, the economic feature of this Irish question, because it has seldom been discussed, and until that aspect of the subject be properly understood the Emmet movement can never be fully appreciated. There has been a rather general tendency to consider him whose memory we are celebrating to-night as a knight-errant rash and foolish, who raised an insurrection which was unjustifiable, but who bore his fate so bravely and so well that the folly of his adventure was redeemed. That view of Emmet is a grievous mistake. Emmet's movement was a protest against political conditions the fruits of which were not then apparent, but which he foresaw. He realized that the destruction of Irish independence meant not merely an outrage upon national sentiment, but the industrial ruin of the country. He foresaw the dreary years of decay and ruin which have since passed into history. His insurrection was a protest against a policy then in its initial stages, which has since proved injurious to the civilized world, dangerous to England and ruinous to Ireland. When the world understands the effects of English law upon Ireland's economic conditions, when it realizes what humanity had lost by the decay of Irish industry, Emmet will cease to be considered the mere head of an Irish riotous movement, and he will be recognized everywhere as the apostle of progress and the martyr of civilization. (Applause.)

How long do you suppose the world, after it understands this subject, will permit the existence of these conditions, which Emmet attempted to overthrow? How long will England continue blindly and stupidly to injure herself by persisting in this fatal attempt to effect the conquest of Ireland? What has England gained by it? I would like to examine the ledger, which shows the profit and the loss arising

from her occupancy of Ireland. I would like to make up the account with any Englishman, however prejudiced, and ascertain just what has been the profit to England of her war against the Irish people. To narrow the inquiry to a period covered by our own experience, I would like to know what England has gained by the denial of Irish emancipation during the twenty years which have elapsed since the Irish people first demanded legislative autonomy, under the guidance and leadership of Charles Stewart Parnell (Applause.) Why does she persist in vainly attempting to maintain this unnatural and ruinous connection by force when there might be a durable salutary connection of interest between the two countries? I confess I can't understand it.

Englishmen say sometimes that it is necessary to maintain a despotic occupation of Ireland for military reasons. That statement is absurd. They say that Ireland and England are in such close proximity that they cannot both be independent. France is closer to England than Ireland, yet France is independent. But they say Ireland would welcome a foreign invader in order to injure England. Well that is the strongest argument I ever heard for changing the conditions which have brought about such an extraordinary opinion in Ireland. Just conceive what that statement means. Why should Ireland welcome a foreign invader, if it were not that she had less to fear from a foreign foe than from the domestic government? (Applause.) Does anybody suppose that if Ireland were free and prosperous to-morrow, she would not be as jealous of the integrity of her soil as any other country in the world? Does anybody suppose that a prosperous Irishman would want a foreign soldier quartered in his house, eating his food, injuring his crops, taking away his horses and cattle? England's best defence against any danger of that kind is to establish in Ireland free institutions which will allow Irishmen to accumulate property or to cherish the hope of acquiring property. Ireland, industrious and hopeful, instead of being a rent in England's armor, would be a buckler of England's safety. Ireland prosperous and contented,—would jealously defend the integrity of her own soil, and in defending it she would be the outpost of England's western defences, the rampart of England's security. England relieved of the necessity of guarding the Irish coast line would need less battleships to defend her own, England, with less hostile sympathies to apprehend from the civilized world, would possess a defensive power greater than all the navies which she can build or all the armies which she could organize.

Does England hold Ireland in chains because of sympathy with the landlords? I confess I can't understand why an English landlord should have any sympathy whatever with the Irish specimens of that order. I have often heard it asked by Americans, Why is landlordism so unpopular in Ireland? Landlordism exists in this country, yet nobody shoots landlords from behind hedges. (Laughter and applause.) Landlordism exists in England, and there never has been any popular uprising against it. But landlordism in England and landlordism in Ireland are vastly different institutions. The English landlord is a resident of the soil which he owns. He is the head of a great industrial force. His tenants are his industrial family. Together they cultivate the soil. When the crops are harvested they divide the product, each taking a portion sufficient to compensate him for the labor which he has expended on the fields. True, the land-



lord takes the larger share, but all that remains after his support is secured is reinvested in the land for the benefit of all who are interested in its cultivation. From time immemorial the chief landlords of England have met in London as the great Parliament of the country. There they have examined its condition, provided for its support and framed laws for its protection. They have always discharged their public functions with patriotism. In their private relations they have usually been humane and generous. No English landlord would evict a tenant merely to raise his rent; the public opinion of England would not tolerate such an act of inhumanity, and the public opinion of England has always made the laws which both landlord and tenant obey. The Parliament which he established became the most efficient, powerful and dignified body in the world. He was always quick to resist any invasion of liberty. He never failed to assert the right of the subject against the power of the monarch. He sent his sons abroad to observe the institutions of other countries, to study their economic conditions, so that when the land passed from one landlord to his heir it generally went into the hands of a man trained to discharge his public and private duties, who realized his responsibility to the State, of which he was a pillar, and to the tenantry who were his industrial family.

Contrast with landlordism beneficent, liberal, constructive in England, landlordism cruel, oppressive, destructive in Ireland. The English landlord was a native product of the English soil. The Irish landlord was a poisonous foreign growth, planted by the hand of confiscation and maintained by the power of tyranny. (Applause.) The English landlord was the friend of his tenantry, the organizer of their industry, the champion of their rights. The Irish landlord was the foe of his tenants, an injury to their welfare, cruelly restrictive of their prosperity by the ruthlessness with which he confiscated the fruits of their labor. Planted in robbery, maintained in crime, he curses the soil which he pollutes. He is an obstacle to progress, a blot on justice. He must be uprooted before the land can support a free, a prosperous or a happy people. (Applause.)

Far be it from me to say that there are not praiseworthy exceptions among Irish landlords. There are a few who live on Irish soil and who have been humane and even generous in the treatment of their tenants, but they have been exceptions so rare that their virtues have only served to throw into darker shade the depravity of the majority.

But, even from the landlord's point of view, what has England gained by this contest waged against the Irish people for the last twenty years? Suppose, when Mr. Parnell first unfurled the banner of Irish independence, England had conceded his demand, does anybody doubt that the condition of the landlords would be vastly better than it is to-day? The values in 1875 of agricultural lands were nearly twice what they are now. If the landlord in a general settlement of the Irish question had obtained half the value of his land then, he would have received more than the whole of its value now. The influence of the landlord has succeeded in delaying any concession of legislative independence to Ireland for twenty years, and as the result of his folly he is placed in a position where he is compelled to witness the prospects of Ireland brightening while his chances of compensation are steadily diminishing. I am one of those who believe that it would be wise to settle with the landlord on some terms of

purchase, and let him go, if by doing so the emancipation of Ireland could be promoted and the period of agitation and disturbance abridged, just as I think it would have been wise for this government to have bought the emancipation of the slaves, if by so doing it could have avoided the sacrifice of human life and treasure entailed on this country by the struggle to suppress slavery. But if the land question be left open until the right to independence shall have been wrung from England, there is no man with less moral claim to compensation for any consequences which may flow from a political revolution than the landlord who never had a right to the land, who never occupied it, who never discharged the duty which every landowner owes to the country which protects his property and to the people who live upon the soil (Applause) Thus we see the credit of the English landlord and the interest of the Irish landlord injured by a policy which has been maintained largely through the influence of both.

Is it the security of property in Ulster which Englishmen think would be endangered by Irish independence? That is another English fad, if I may use the expression. We are told that an Irish Parliament would render all property in Ulster insecure, and it is said that, as Ulster is the garden spot of Ireland, the maintenance of its prosperity is of more importance than the happiness of all the other Irish provinces.

If Ulster is more prosperous than the rest of Ireland it is only because the linen industry was spared when the woollen industry was suppressed. The linen industry is to-day without a rival anywhere in the world because it enjoys the advantage of a peculiar capacity in the Ulster soil for the production of flax. But the rest of Ireland had a much greater capacity for the production of wool. In the time of William III the woollen industry was far more important than the linen industry. Had both industries been left undisturbed, the manufacture of woollens to-day would be the most important element of Irish prosperity, and in every province of Ireland prosperous towns would be engaged in placing the product of Irish looms before the consumers of the world. But owing to the political conditions, Ulster is the most prosperous province in Ireland, and Ulster can serve as an illustration for my proposition that the security of property will not be endangered, but protected by the recognition of Irish independence. Property in Ulster or elsewhere can be exposed to but one danger from government, and that is the danger of confiscation. It is said that if the restraining influence of English authority were removed an Irish government would confiscate property in Ulster by an unjust use of the power of taxation. But if all the wealth of Ireland be owned by the people of Ulster, and an Irish government should confiscate it by taxation, what would be left to support that government after the confiscation had been completed? The slightest reflection should satisfy any one that no Irish government could afford to confiscate the property of citizens on whose prosperity its support must largely depend. Whoever controlled the government would have no more important duty to himself than to carefully conserve the industrial conditions which would yield the largest revenue to the public treasury. Moreover, the springs of human nature are always the same. It is because the Irish have no responsibility for the law which exists in Ireland that they have been hostile to its enforcement. The moment a people are made independent they become responsible for their own condition. They become obedient to the law.

because they know they must bear the consequences of their own acts, that they will enjoy the fruits of industry and order, that they must bear the disciplinary results of folly or idleness. Under an independent government, every man in Ireland who owned anything would be a force for the preservation of property. If all his possessions consisted of a clay pipe, he would probably find some other Irishman without a clay pipe anxious to take it away from him. The result would be that every possessor of property, from the owner of the clay pipe up to the millionaire, would realize that the law which protected the clay pipe was the same law that protected every other form of property. The defense of the law would be the business of all who were interested in the preservation of property—not merely of those who possessed property, but of those who hoped to acquire property. And where is the Irishman in whose breast there does not spring that hope of success which makes him a triumphant toiler wherever he finds a soil to cultivate under the generous light of liberty and under the protection of free institutions? (Applause.)

In the light of these truths surely we may conclude that Irish freedom involves no danger to Ulster, and I do not think even an Englishman will seriously contend there is any justification for opposing it on military grounds.

Now let us see just how England has been affected in power and prestige by these twenty years of continual struggle. I venture the assertion that the Irish patriots, headed by Charles Stewart Parnell, (applause), who have waged the battle of Irish emancipation, without a single soldier in the field, without money, without arms and much of the time confined in English jails have inflicted more damage on England than the loss of half her empire. More damage, I repeat, than if she had lost half her empire, and I believe I can satisfy anybody that my assertion is not an extravagant statement.

There is a very wide difference of opinion among Englishmen as to whether her colonial possessions are of any advantage to the mother country; but there is no doubt about the importance and value to her of her own Parliament. England, in the struggle with Ireland, has already suffered an abasement of her Parliament which can never be recovered; and I venture the statement that, if she does not soon concede parliamentary independence to Ireland, she will be forced to sacrifice her own parliamentary government. (Applause.) Now let us see just on what that statement depends. Ever since the time of King Edward I down to 1870, the English Parliament had existed without rules. It was the most efficient legislative body in the world, because it had never been found necessary to adopt a rule to repress disorder in any form. Its procedure was entirely governed by its traditions. Its dignity was in the custody of every member. In an evil hour for itself it undertook to pass coercion acts for Ireland, and by the time its purpose was accomplished the whole character of the House of Commons had been changed. It had established a set of rules, which, while they were intended to nullify the opposition of the Irish members, are now used every day to restrict the privileges of the English members. The Parliament still lives, but the loss of its dignity has been the destruction of its outer shell, and the fragments of that outer shell bestrews the floors of the House of Commons, trampled under foot by the Irish patriots in their struggle to defend Irish rights. (Applause.) The closure has been imported from France, and this Parliament, dressed up in a French domino,



is not the ancient Parliament of England, whose history is the pride of Englishmen. This Parliament, dressed up in the procedure of the French Chambers, is something vastly different from the Parliament which curbed the power of kings, and wrote its declaration of rights in the blood of a monarch. But the abasement of its dignity through the sacrifice of its ancient procedure is but a slight injury compared to the dangers which still threaten it. I have said that, if she continues to deny legislative autonomy to Ireland, England will be left without a parliamentary government of its own. I mean to say that parliamentary government, as it has heretofore existed in England, will be impossible under the conditions which she is now producing. Parliamentary government necessarily means party government. Its existence implies that one party or the other would always control a majority in the House of Commons, and could always, therefore, be charged with the power and responsibility of government. But with eighty-five members of the House indifferent to English questions, hostile to both English parties, supporting no policy, except that which will promote the national aspirations of Ireland, no Cabinet can undertake the government of the country unless its supporters in the House of Commons outnumber by nearly a hundred the followers of the opposing English party.

Now, government by a majority of a hundred is not government by a simple majority, and is not parliamentary government, as it has been heretofore understood. It may be something better than parliamentary government, but it is not the parliamentary government under which England has grown and prospered. We have already seen a party which was in a minority in Great Britain maintained in power for three years by Irish votes. And that condition may arise again. Cabinets made and unmade by votes hostile to the existence of the Government which they administer are simply absurd. It is a bad thing for both England and Ireland to have Irishmen establishing governments for England in English Parliaments. It is worse for Ireland to have Irish affairs managed by an English Parliament. In God's name, let each country abandon the task of managing the affairs of the other to the injury of both, let the representatives of each go their separate ways, and let two independent parliaments become the fountains of their common prosperity.

The history of this century proves that Emmet's insurrection of 1803 was the initial step in a movement which has never yet been suppressed. The purpose which animated him was the same as that which fired the hearts and nerved the arms of Wolfe Tone, of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, of Orr and of the Sheareses. As the sword of resistance fell from his grasp it was caught up by other hands. It has been often sheathed, but has never been cast away. The cause for which he died was never more severe than it is now, never more vigorous than it is at the present day.

I confess to some sense of humiliation and regret that the century should almost have elapsed and that Emmet's monument is still without a foundation. It is related, I think, of King Edward I that, when the fatal sickness overtook him while he was at the head of an invading force on the Scottish frontiers, he summoned his son and charged him that his body should not be buried but should be carried before his army until the last foot of Scottish territory had been conquered. We cannot carry Robert Emmet's body before Irish hosts, but we must keep his memory before Irish patriots. (Applause.)

Emmet's body is in the ground, but his funeral obsequies have not yet been celebrated. When Irishmen are tempted to quarrel, let them remember they are still in the presence of the dead, and that no Irishman is justified in criticising another while a vestige of English tyranny oppresses the Irish soil (Applause)

I say this not to blame or criticise anybody, but as an appeal to all. Ireland stands at the bar of international opinion, asking judgment against England, invoking the arm of the civilized world to do justice to her and thus to protect itself. The answer will not be long delayed. Ireland has a peculiar claim on the court in which she pleads. The civilization to which she appeals she has largely helped to create. Whoever studies the intellectual development of Europe will place the dawn of learning and the restoration of letters at the period when Charlemagne, having conquered the Saxons after more than thirty years of resistance, laid aside the sabre and attempted to train his hand to the mastery of the pen. The school which he founded was the germ of that University of Paris which has done so much for the spread of intellectual light, and for the advancement of civilization. That school was largely taught by Irish professors. It was to Ireland that he sent his son for instruction. Buckle, Guizot, every writer who traces the progress of civilization, admits that during the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries the Irish missionaries bore the lamp of instruction into every country of Europe. Irish missionaries preached and taught in England, in Scotland, in France; they completed the civilization of Germany.

Historians have chronicled their achievements, but the world has given them little credit for their service to humanity. These humble servants of the cross, frequently disguised under names assumed in religion, have left few traces of their identity, while they have erected everywhere imposing intellectual monuments of their industry. To-day Ireland faces the only dangers which at the close of this century threatens Christian States. Anarchism in crowded cities makes rulers tremble and citizens uneasy. Thoughtful men are alarmed at the spread of notions inconsistent with order and with social law, which proceed from a growing disbelief in the fountain of all law, while the very essence of Christian civilization, the marriage tie, is imperiled by laws which tolerate and even encourage the granting of divorce. Europe, America, Christendom, confronted by such perils as these, will welcome to the family of nations as a rampart against the rising tide of infidelity and immorality that country where the chastity of the women is never suspected (applause), where the doors of the divorce court are always closed (applause), where love of country is intertwined with faith in God (applause).

As we behold Irish opposition to English oppression as vigorous at the close of this nineteenth century as it was at the close of the twelfth, we know that Irish patriotism is a force which cannot be destroyed. It is a flame which is unquenched and unquenchable, which is not smothered, but fed, by the blood of patriots. The emancipation of Ireland is assured, because the cause of Ireland is the cause of justice; it is the cause of morality; it is the cause of progress, it is the cause of civilization. (Applause)

Our faith in her triumph is not built on the promises of princes which may be broken, not on treaties which may be violated, but on laws which are eternal, on forces which are indestructible, it is built upon the fortitude of Ireland's sons, the virtue of Ireland's daughters,



the merits of Ireland's cause, the memory of Ireland's martyrs, the justice of Ireland's God (Great applause and cheers for Bourke Cochran)

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## SPEECH OF THE HON JOHN F FINERTY, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED IRISH LEAGUE OF AMERICA

DELIVERED AT THE "NEW MOVEMENT CONVENTION," Y. M. C. A. BUILDING,  
CHICAGO, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1895

Gentlemen of the convention I would be utterly insensible to the generosity of the Irish-American heart if I did not deeply and sincerely feel the weight of the honor you have placed upon me. To preside over a convention of this character is one of the proudest incidents in the life of any man, to preside over a convention that has met to renew the work of Theobald Wolfe Tone began in France 100 years ago, is a matter of pride that I shall carry with me to the grave. I observe already in some of our American papers editorials questioning the prudence of this convention and dictating to us a policy, hoping we will do nothing to offend English sentiment. What do we care for English sentiment? We don't want to offend American sentiment, we don't want to offend French sentiment, we don't want to offend Russian sentiment, but we do want to offend seriously our hereditary and merciless foes.

We sound to-day the death-knell of whiggery in Irish politics, we stand here on our rights as a race to advocate absolute independence of the land that gave us or our fathers birth, a land, not a colony of England in the words of a great orator, with a civilization older than the gospel, a land that has made a heroic struggle for her rights, and which has never yet yielded to the rod of the conqueror. We admit the physical conquest of Ireland, but we deny a moral conquest. The self same spirit that met the spearmen of Strongbow animates the hearts of the young Irishmen of to-day. The conditions are changed indeed. Our American friends may preach to us the doctrine of peace and prudence. We will follow them so long as may be necessary, but I will remind our editorial American friends that when the Americans had a grievance against England they did not stand on the order in which they threw the British tea chests into Boston harbor. They made the law officers of the British crown swallow their own papers on Boston common, and the dose was so indigestible that it killed their rule in this country.

The American people have a right, indeed, to tell us that we must deport ourselves as American citizens, because we are American citizens, and we will remind them that they can point to no blot in our history in connection with this country. The flag of our fathers has never been raised against the government, and if they look for a flag that is an enemy to America they will find that it is of a very different color from the glorious green of Ireland.

Why should the American people be so fearful of the sensibilities of "illustrious" England? What has she ever done for America? Did she not seek to strangle her in the cradle? Did she not smite her in the face when she was only, you might say, a maiden entering upon womanhood? Did she not conspire to assassinate her when in the full strength of her pride she declined to acquiesce in the disruption



JOHN F. FINERTY.  
President United Irish League of America.



of the American union? Have not the English shown their enmity and illwill in every connection and on every occasion in defiance of our Monroe Doctrine? Not longer than six months ago they went down to our neighboring republic and they dared to land their mercenaries in defiance of right and decency. Editors say they are afraid we will complicate them with England. Suppose we do. I know there are plenty of English syndicates tied up in this country. I know there is plenty of English capital tied up also, very much more than there is of American capital in England. Let England dare to fire the first shot. I am aware that the English press will sneer at this, I know they will say we are here for other objects than the liberation of Ireland.

It is physically impossible and morally impossible for the English press to tell the truth, but we are met here to-day to tell America, France and Russia, and every possible friend of ours, and every possible enemy of the British government, that we are in this fight to stay. We are not enlisted for one year or for three years but for the war. The British minister may send his battalions of spies; we care nothing about them. We don't care if all Scotland yard is within hearing to-night, because we are stating openly and above board the undying principle that Ireland has as much right to separate and distinct freedom as England herself. Ireland has never acquiesced in the rule of England. The so-called union of 1801 is a fraud, a nullity and a usurpation, and the Irish nation is not bound by it.

We impeach the authority of England by her abrogation of the treaty of Limerick, we impeach the authority of England by her violation of the renunciation act of 1783, we impeach the authority of England by the fraudulent and corrupt means with which she bought a minority parliament, representing a minority of the Irish people, and which murdered Irish liberty through the unconstitutional act of voting its own extinguishment. We say to-night that by all moral laws, by the laws of nations, by the law of treaties, by the law of contracts, Ireland is not bound to be an integral part of the British empire.

England stole from us our parliament, such as it was. We have asked it back, we have gone out of our way to humiliate ourselves before this proud and conscienceless power. Are we to wait forever on the return of the English heart to charity? No. What was her answer to Benjamin Franklin when he went on that mission? Scorn and contumely. When did she thought strike home that she had to respect American opinion? When the shot was fired at Concord by the American farmers.

We are here, my friends, not to be bespattered by the slanders of England, we are not here to be told we contemplate murder. We are not here to be told we contemplate swindling. Those properties belong to England. We are here to invite the sympathy of the whole world to our cause. We are here to say to our beloved Uncle Sam that if he draws the sword in defense of the Monroe doctrine, or any other American principle, we here representing the Irish of America, from the Pacific to the Atlantic, are behind the American government.

We say to the Russian, as he marches on India, "our sympathies are with you." We say to the German wrangling with England about possessing Africa, "Take all the continent if you can." We say to the Frenchman if he menaces England's interests in her colonies, "God speed the work take them all." We are the friends of every enemy of England, and we are the enemies of every friend of Eng-

land and we want to drive it home and nail it to the mast to the death

Now, gentlemen, we mean to conduct this organization which is to be formed on broad and manly and martial principles. We tell England and we tell the rest of the world that we are determined to encourage the enlistment of our young Irishmen, either independently or in regular battalions. We want to be ready when the time comes. When Theobald Wolfe Tone went to France with hardly a dollar in his pocket he took with him a letter of introduction from the American secretary of state to James Monroe at Paris who presented him to the French government. He laid before the French government the plan of organization of the United Irishmen. He stirred the heart of France to send two expeditions—one from the Dutch republic and one from France herself—to the relief of Ireland. The elements shattered them. Other expeditions followed. Wolfe Tone himself fought on board a French line of battleship until she was disabled and had to surrender. He was taken to Dublin. You know the sad story of his trial and death, but he said to the court-martial which sentenced him to be hanged, "I believed from my youth that the sole grievance of Ireland is English connection." This fiery gospel comes from the churchyard of Bodenstown, from the grave of St. Michael's where the youthful lips of Emmet are silent forever. It is re-echoed from the spires of Newry where John Mitchell sleeps in honor, from the waves of the Missouri that roll over the relics of Meagher, from the unconsecrated graves of Salford prison where repose the remains of the martyrs of Manchester who laid down their lives for their country.

The necessities of empire are great indeed, but the requirements of liberty are greater still. The loss of Ireland might cripple England, but it would restore Ireland to life, to honor and to prosperity. The pride of empire is great indeed, but the pride of patriotism is greater still, and there is not a man of us here to-day. I venture to say it, that would not rather have Ireland poor and trampled as she is in defense of the maintenance of a principle, than have her kept a harlot of the spoils of the British empire. We want no partnership in crime. We don't want the rupees of India. We don't want the wealth of Africa. We have no pride or concern in that empire. Our wish is to mete out to it the same measure that it has meted out to us. We are the open, avowed and proclaimed enemies of that empire, and will devote our efforts, our means, and if necessary, our lives to accomplish our purpose—the emancipation of Ireland.

This, then, gentlemen of the convention, is the spirit in which we enter upon this work. I will again renew to you my thanks and I will say to you that old Ireland may well borrow hope from this magnificent demonstration, and it may be that the dream of our patriots may be realized in our own day—that we shall see the flag that has no home or abiding place, except in other lands than Ireland, floating above a free and independent Irish nation.

"Full many a nobler heart than ours  
Has perished that end to gain.

And many a mind of God-like powers  
Was wasted not all in vain.

They have left us a treasure of pity and wrath  
As a spur to our cold-blood set.

And we'll tread in their path with a spirit that hath  
Assurance of triumph yet."



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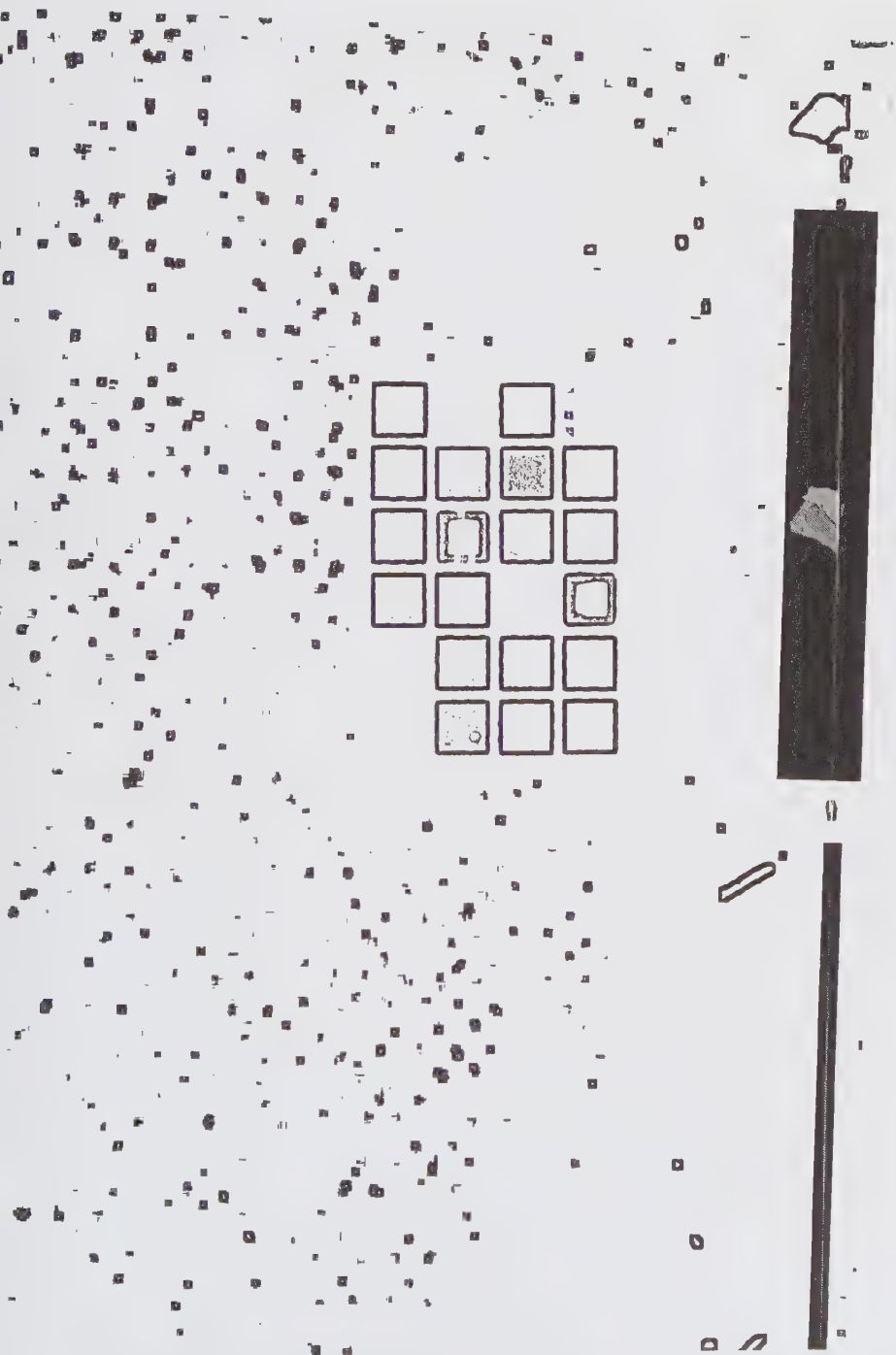
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